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ABSTRACT

This book, which can be used in secondary and college courses, is the first of two volumes which present a Chinese view of China and the world. The reality of everyday life as experienced by the Chinese people is recreated in the series. Almost all of the materials in both volumes has been written by Chinese and has been taken from a variety of sources: autobiographies, fiction, poetry, newspaper and magazine articles, and historical documents. Each primary source selection is preceded by an editor's introduction which provides background information and a few questions for class discussion. Volume one begins with the story of the Communist rise to power in 1949, which led to perhaps the most spectacular social revolution the world has ever seen. This first volume focuses on the changes brought about in the lives of the peasants, the masses who make their living from the land. It is comprised of four major parts. In Part I the Chinese talk about the "Revolution and Land Reform." Part II, "A New World View," presents materials on Maoist ethics, the traditional family ethic, and religion. Part III deals with "The Liberation of Women." The status of women, the home life of a saleswoman and romance in China are discussed. Part IV deals with "Politics." The Confucian heritage, education, and dissent are included among the topics discussed. (Author/RM)

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THROUGH CHINESE EYES

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Volume 1

Revolution:

A Nation Stands Up

Revised Edition

PETER J. SEYBOLT

LEON E. CLARK, General Editor

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For Cynthia, Taylor, and Amy

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Foreword

PEOPLE—AND NATIONS—have a tendency to look at the outside world from their own perspectives. This is natural and perhaps necessary, for we are all prisoners of a particular space and time. But how limited and boring one perspective can be! And how faulty and biased our information would be if we listened only to ourselves!

The main goal of THROUGH CHINESE EYES is to broaden our perspective by presenting a Chinese view of China and the world. Almost all of the material in these two books has been written by Chinese, and it has been taken from a variety of sources: autobiographies, fiction, poetry, newspaper and magazine articles, and historical documents.

Unlike most books about "other peoples," THROUGH CHINESE EYES does not try to *explain* China but to *show* it; it does not offer "expert" analysis by outside observers but, rather, attempts to recreate the reality of everyday life as experienced by the Chinese people. Interpretation is left to the reader. In effect, THROUGH CHINESE EYES has two objectives; to let the Chinese speak for themselves, and to let readers think for themselves.

Volume I, *Revolution: A Nation Stands Up,* begins with the story of the Communist rise to power in 1949, which led to perhaps the most spectacular social revolution the world has ever seen—and it is still going on. In only a handful of years, the Communists have been able to transform the lives of one billion Chinese, almost one quarter of the world's population.

Volume I focuses on the changes brought about in the lives of the peasants, the masses who make their living from the land.

It also presents material on recent changes in family life, religion, women's roles and politics.

Volume 2, *Transformation: Building a New Society*, continues the theme of change by exploring the struggles and debates within China over economic development, the proper path for socialism, and the role of literature and art in society. It also examines such issues as population growth, pollution, health care, and China's foreign policy. Volume 2 ends with a section on the Chinese American experience.

Historical material is interspersed throughout both volumes, providing a glimpse of China's rich past and at the same time indicating the continuity and contrast with the present.

In some ways, China may seem different from the United States, and indeed it is. But in many more ways, the Chinese as people are similar to people anywhere in the world. Human beings, no matter where they live, face the same basic needs: to eat, to work, to love, to play, to get along with their fellow men. Learning how the Chinese respond to these needs may teach us something useful for our own lives.

More important, getting to know the Chinese as people—sharing in their thoughts and feelings, their beliefs and aspirations—should help us to develop a sense of empathy, a feeling of identity, with human beings everywhere. In the end we should know more about ourselves—indeed, we should have an expanded definition of who we are—because we will know more about the common humanity that all people share. Self-knowledge is the ultimate justification for studying about other people.

LEON E. CLARK

Revolution
A Nation Stands Up

Introduction

> . . . once China's destiny is in the hands of the Chinese people, China, like the rising sun in the east, will illuminate every corner of the land with a brilliant flame, swiftly clean up the mire left by the reactionary government, heal the wounds of war, and build a new, powerful people's republic worthy of the name.
>
> Mao Tse-tung, June, 1949*

> We have a common feeling that our work will be recorded in the history of mankind, and that it will clearly demonstrate that the Chinese, who comprise one quarter of humanity, have begun to stand up. . . .
>
> Henceforth our nation will enter the large family of peace-loving and freedom-loving nations of the world. . . . Our nation will never again be an insulted nation. We have stood up.
>
> Mao Tse-tung, September, 1949†

MAO TSE-TUNG, Chairman of the Communist Party of China, uttered these words in 1949, shortly before the Communists established a new government called the People's Republic of China. Mao's words reveal a sense of destiny, an awareness that the Chinese revolution then taking place would have a profound impact not only on China but on the whole world.

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* Mao Tse-tung, *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung,* Vol. IV (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1961), p. 408.

† Stuart Schram, *The Political Thought of Mao Tse-tung* (New York: Praeger, 1969), p. 167.

Today we are only beginning to realize how prophetic his words were.

What did Mao Tse-tung mean when he said "China has stood up"? Stood up to whom? Why was China down? To appreciate the significance of this phrase we must have some knowledge of China's past.

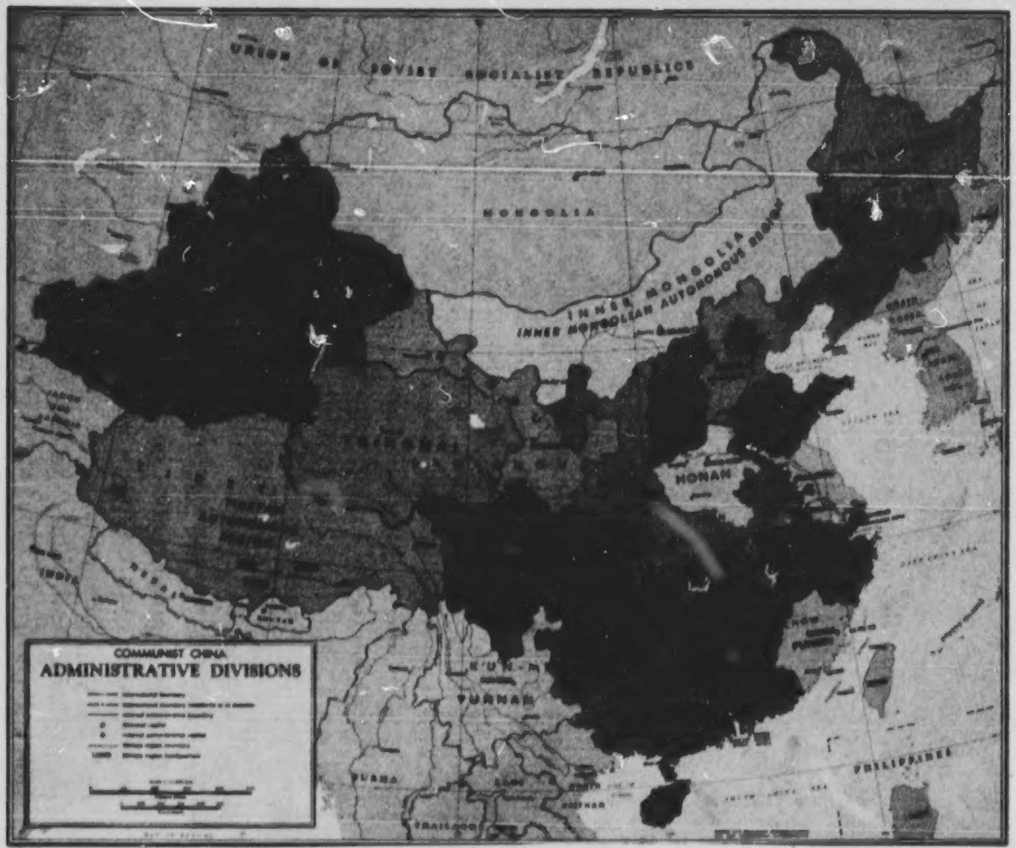
For over two thousand years, until the late 1800's, the Chinese considered themselves the only truly civilized people on earth. They felt they needed nothing from the outside world and had nothing to learn from it.

Their sense of superiority was not empty self-delusion. Chinese poets and painters were at the height of their creative genius a thousand years ago, when Europe was in the Dark Ages and America was yet to be discovered by Europeans. The compass, gunpowder, and movable-type printing were all invented in China long before they were known in Europe.

These inventions, which played so great a part in the development of the modern West, changed almost nothing in China. In traditional China, harmony and stability were valued. Conflict and change were avoided. The idea of progress was unknown.

Secure in their sense of superiority and their self-sufficiency, the Chinese were blind to the changes taking place elsewhere in the world. Then, in 1840, the British defeated the Chinese in a war and imposed treaties on them that gave foreigners special rights in China and put them above Chinese law. A once superior people became inferior, discriminated against in their own country. China's system of government, which for two thousand years had provided a unity and stability unknown elsewhere in the world, rapidly disintegrated in the face of Western demands. The last Chinese emperor abdicated in 1911. Four decades of chaos followed. All attempts to build a new nation and to free China from foreign domination failed until 1949, when Mao Tse-tung and the Chinese Communist Party provided the leadership and inspiration that enabled China to "stand up."

For Mao and the Communists, standing up meant far


COMMUNIST CHINA
ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS
UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS
MONGOLIA
INNER MONGOLIA
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HONAN
YUNNAN
NEPAL
INDIA
BHUTAN
BURMA
THAILAND
PHILIPPINES

(Directorate of Intelligence, Office of Basic and Geographic Intelligence, Central Intelligence Agency, *Communist China Map Folio* [Washington: Central Intelligence Agency, 1967], n.p.)

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more than casting off the weight of foreign oppression. It also meant casting off tradition, which for centuries had burdened the peasant farmer with an almost intolerable load. China stood up because the Chinese peasant stood up. Peasant revolution brought the Communists to power.

There is much to admire in traditional China. The appeal of Chinese art, literature, and philosophy is timeless and very broad. But let us not confuse the gems of a civilization with the daily life of the majority of the people. Until recently, most Chinese could not read, much less afford to own the exquisite jade ornaments or beautiful glazed porcelain ("china") that we associate with Chinese culture. For them life was a continual struggle for survival. The old ruling class, for all its accomplishments, had purchased the pleasures and refinements of high culture with the sweat of laboring people. Taxes, rents, and interest on loans provided the rich with their treasures and kept the worker and peasant on the threshold of starvation.

Finally, the pressures for change introduced by the West combined with long-standing grievances of the laboring poor to form an explosive mixture. "Maoism" was the spark that changed age-old peasant rebelliousness to revolution.

The Chinese revolution continues today, although not in the violent form it has sometimes assumed in the past. What is the nature of this revolution? What does it mean to the Chinese people? How has it changed their lives? This book will attempt to answer these questions and will raise others. As you study the Chinese experience, you should keep in mind that one of every four or five people in the world is Chinese. China is the most populous nation on earth and one of the largest geographically. What happens in China will inevitably influence the rest of the world in one way or another. As you read about China, think about your own life and your own society. How will changes in China affect you?

Lin-hsien County

From Poverty to Prosperity

Editor's Introduction: At least 80 per cent of the Chinese people live in the countryside. That is where the Chinese revolution began, and it is where the greatest changes have taken place. If you went to rural China today, what would you see? The report of a perceptive American journalist helps us make the transition from our own environment to that of China.

For an American, a drive deep into Lin-hsien County in the northwest corner of Honan Province is like driving straight into the early nineteenth or late eighteenth century.

It is threshing time in Lin-hsien County now—with a bumper crop of wheat—and all around one sees the broad threshing floors of hard-baked clay and hundreds of men and women and children winnowing the wheat, tossing it into the air with wooden shovels and letting the wind separate the grain from the chaff, just as Americans did before the days of the threshing machine.

And in the fields, men and women bowed to the waist stride swiftly through the high golden grain, cutting it with their scythes and quickly binding the sheaves with a strand of

Harrison E. Salisbury, "Once-Arid Region of China Blooms," *New York Times*, June 27, 1972. © 1972 by The New York Times Company. Reprinted by permission.

fiber, just as Americans did before the days of the McCormick reaper.

Beside the threshing floors rise great cones and cottages of straw, neat and orderly, enough for regiments of little pigs to live in. Some of the conical mounds of straw are already being covered with a heavy layer of clay, which will harden in the fierce Honan sunshine and create a mud silo that will preserve the straw for winter forage.

This is what you see as your car winds for 120 or 150 miles over the remote roads and tracks of Lin-hsien County.

There is an incredible bustle on the roads, cart after cart drawn by men or donkeys, or men and donkeys, or horses or occasionally cows, pulling everything the countryside can need. There is grain going to storage depots, cotton to gins, coal to steel mills or country brick-kilns, great truck tires from the Lin-hsien tire factory, iron pots for the villages, coke for the steel mill, limestone from local deposits, iron ore for the smelter, manure for the fields, and earth for bricks.

Whatever it is that mankind needs in Lin-hsien County, here it is in the carts. Even long after nightfall they go on, many of them with one or two great sails so that the wind can help the tireless donkey—or man—with his burden.

Here are more children than you have ever seen in a day. They line every village street, they peer from every courtyard entryway, they appear by the scores to look at the foreigners, they gather scrub oak leaves on the mountainsides to feed the wild silkworms, and they harrow the newly harvested fields to ready them for the second crop, which will be corn or sweet potatoes.

Men are pulling wooden plows through the brown clay soil, and cows are endlessly circling the wells to pump up the water. The houses are built of stone or adobe. . . . Women [are] visible at their hand looms and huge iron basins, each holding a meal for the great families—a dozen or fourteen members is not unusual.

The American sees all this and feels transported into the past, although even in the American past it is doubtful that such a labor-intensive life ever could have existed.

But what does the Chinese see? Something entirely different—a countryside, Lin-hsien County, transformed beyond recognition.

This was an arid and barren countryside that traditionally had an exodus of population. There was drought nine years out of ten, and poor peasants traditionally sold their children and went out to beg to earn enough to escape starvation.

Chinese eyes see Lin-hsien County as a land of promise. Since the construction of an enormous canal to bring water from the Chang River, which divides Honan and Shansi provinces, life has changed amazingly. The canal was completed eight years ago, and it, together with other irrigation projects, enable the entire county to have water now.

The Honan people regard this as an accomplishment equivalent to the construction of the Great Wall of China. The canal is not so large as the Great Wall, but the comparison is not altogether out of place, for more than 21 million cubic yards of earth and stone were moved—enough to build a twelve-foot-wide highway from Canton in South China to Shen-yang in Manchuria.

Chinese eyes see healthy children. Cholera, smallpox, measles, venereal and other epidemic diseases have vanished. They see people who are lean and muscular from working from 5:30 A.M. to 10 or 11 P.M., but no undernourishment and no serious dietary diseases.

They see roads, . . . stony, dusty, bumpy, but genuine roads in place of the cart tracks and footpaths that connected most of these villages ten years ago. And they see the extraordinary rash of home-building.

American eyes can see that the country is fruitful and the people healthy. But Chinese eyes are needed to record the full measure of the change.

Lin-hsien County

A Recollection of the Past

Editor's Introduction: The previous article on Lin-hsien County concluded that "Chinese eyes are needed to record the full measure of change." Let us look at Lin-hsien County in the past through the eyes of a Chinese who lived there thirty years ago. His account is one of a collection of stories recalling the bitterness of the past. In recent years, the Communists have encouraged the publication of such stories to show young people in China how things have changed and to remind them that continued progress requires the same hard work and constant struggle that eliminated the misery once commonplace for much of the populace.

Not all landlords in China were as bad as Yang Chen-kang, the villain in the story, but there is no question that the landlord system fostered inequality of wealth and much suffering. The Communists define a landlord family as one that owned land but did no work. It lived by renting land to peasants, who often had to give the landlord as much as half of what they produced.

The Communists estimate that families of landlords and "rich peasants" (farmers who worked the land but had a surplus to rent out) were about 8 per cent of the rural population before 1949, and that they owned 80 per cent of the land. The other 92 per cent of the population were classed as "middle peasants" (those who could support themselves without renting land but had no excess

Yueh Feng and Wang Tien-ch'i, "The Land," ***The People of T'ai-hang*** **(Peking: China Youth Publishing House, 1964). Translated in** ***Chinese Anthropology,*** **Vol. 4, No. 4 (New York: International Arts and Sciences Press, 1972), pp. 300–306; abridged. Used by permission.**

land to rent out), "poor peasants" (those who owned land but not enough to support themselves and who had to rent land from others), and hired laborers, who owned no land at all. The story that follows is told by a former poor peasant. What political conditions, not mentioned in the story, had to exist to give the landlord so much power? ❧

I WAS BORN in . . . Lin-hsien [County], Honan Province. As soon as I was able, I began to follow my mother to the fields. She went in front digging up the earth. I came behind breaking up the clods. Every day, by noon, my mother sat on the ground, so tired that she did not even want to eat. She only drank water in huge gulps. Usually, I massaged her back, waist, and legs. Once I asked her, "Why doesn't my father show up to help us till the land?" Immediately her eyelids reddened, and I never dared ask that question again.

Every time it rained there were leaks in our thatched roof. We were kept busy rolling up our mats and trying to prevent our pillows from getting wet, but nothing kept dry. In the confusion, my grandmother usually started complaining about my father. . . .

"I've told your husband a hundred times that he should find some time to repair the roof, but he won't listen! He is a farmhand employed on a regular basis, but he is not a slave of the Yangs. His father said as he was dying, 'Never hire out to the Yangs. Never fill the rice bowl of that house.' Ha! But he won't listen! Has he forgotten how his father died? The Yang house killed him with overwork and anger. And he went to his grave with nothing.

"Little Chin-pao, whenever you and your younger brother argue, remember what your grandfather said. Don't go to the Yang house. Don't fill the rice bowl of that house," said my grandmother, hugging my brother and me.

"Of the twenty or thirty families in this village, which one doesn't till the Yangs' land? If we don't till, what will we eat?" my mother asked.

"Does the rice of the Yang house taste so good? Sooner or later, bad things will happen!" my grandmother warned.

After it was all said, my grandmother began to weep, my mother began to weep, and my younger brother, Yin-ao, and I also began to weep. And that rain was still falling through our thatched roof.

Later, I was told that my ancestors had passed down two *mou* of land. [A *mou* is about one-sixth of an acre.] After the birth of my father and his two brothers, Grandfather could not support his family with the meager income from the crop on this small plot. Although he should never have done it, he leased several *mou* of land from the big landlord Yang Chen-kang. He worked hard, the suffering increased, and the back taxes accumulated into a large debt. Yang Chen-kang had the nickname of "Black Snake," and this venomous viper coiled

Starving peasants in the 1930s. (Photo courtesy Jean Elliott Johnson.)

around our family. He wanted to recover the debt by seizing our two *mou* of land. My grandfather could never give up that land, so he had to work for Yang Chen-kang and pay back his debt with his wages. He toiled for more than twenty years, but he was unable to clear the debt. When my grandfather died, we still had that two *mou* of land, which was still insufficient to feed us. Like my grandfather, my father leased a plot of land from Yang Chen-kang. The same things happened again. My father incurred a debt and had to work for Yang Chen-kang and repay his debt with his wages. And so we slaved for the Yang house from one generation to the next.

After the birth of my second younger brother, Ch'üan-pao, which meant another mouth to feed, my mother worried all the more. One night my father returned from work and stood by the *k'ang* and stared at me and my two brothers. He said: "One generation after another! Will they too have to lease land, run up debts, and forever be trampled under the feet of others?" My mother thought he looked strange and asked about it. But he would not say anything. At that time, my father often got together with some of his poor friends. Often he did not come back until midnight. We did not know what he was up to. As soon as someone called him from the yard, he hurried off. This added much to my mother's worries. She feared something would happen. . . .

Early on the morning of December 20, someone knocked at the door and cried: "Oh no, Chin-pao's father has been murdered!" Immediately, my mother pulled me and carried my younger brothers to the riverbank. Oh god! My father's body was there. . . .

Yang Chen-kang had said that he wanted to arrest the culprit, but in fact the culprit was Yang Chen-kang himself. My father and his friends had aroused his suspicion. He was fearful lest the poor people in the village unite against him. He decided to "show his strength by making the first move." In order to kill one to warn a hundred, he ordered one of his lackeys to murder my father. He also planned to seize our two *mou* of land.

When Grandmother heard this story, she grew both angry and vengeful. Her heart was overflowing with the death of her husband and her son, but she could not even tell the world. She lay on the *k'ang* mortally sick. She died a few days later.

My brothers and I helped Mother till our land. We worked from before dawn till after dusk. We were cultivating two plots of land: one was our own two *mou* of land; the other was the four *mou* of land that my father had leased from Yang Chen-kang. . . .

Who would have imagined that God himself would have his eyes closed to us? It did not rain for more than three months, and the wheat sprouts were becoming yellow and wasted. My mother's hopes for paying off our debt were crushed, and she fell sick from worry.

After the autumn harvest, Yang Chen-kang seized our two *mou* of land and took two large earthen vessels and a large wash basin away from us, which in no way diminished our debt. Yang Chen-kang also sent someone to fetch me back so that I could work for him as a shepherd and thereby work off our debt with my wages. My mother was infuriated and she swore at the man: "Black-hearted black snake! You taxed us for using a few *mou* of your land. You tortured my father-in-law to death. You murdered my husband. You seized our land. Now, you're going to lay your hands on my son!" She recalled my grandfather's words: Never make a living by filling the rice bowl of the Yang house. But if she did not send me, they would have no mercy. So, Mother finally sent me off to him with her tears. . . .

Stone Wall Village Turns Over

PART I

Editor's Introduction: Changes in Lin-hsien County did not come about overnight. They were the result of years of struggle and new forms of organization. The peasant family in the preceding story would be unable to conceive of the life that is characteristic of Lin-hsien today. What happened? Part of the answer to that question can be found in events that took place in a farming village not far from Lin-hsien County.

The year is 1947. The Japanese have recently been defeated in World War II by the Chinese and their allies after eight years of fighting on Chinese soil. But war continues in China. Now it is a civil war between the Communists, led by Mao Tse-tung, and the Nationalists (or Kuomintang), led by Chiang K'ai-shek, President of the Republic of China before the Communists gained control.

Stone Wall Village, where the story takes place, is in the Communist-held area of China. The Communists are promoting a campaign to redistribute land from the rich to the poor and to overthrow the old ruling class in the countryside. Stone Wall Village, like Lin-hsien, is in a very poor part of the country. In that respect it is not typical of all of China, but the events that took place there were similar to those that were to alter radically social relationships throughout China.

Jack Belden, *China Shakes the World* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972), pp. 174–88; abridged. Copyright © 1949 by Jack Belden. Reprinted by permission of Monthly Review Press.

As you read Part I of "Stone Wall Village Turns Over," think of the problems facing those who were promoting land reform. Why did revolution move slowly in China?❧

THE LAND IN this region is rocky, bare of forest, and grudging in its fertility, so that the hard-pressed farmers have been forced to build terraces and cultivate the hill slopes nearly to the top of every peak. . . .

The common farmers, always hungry and always in debt, had a verse about their bitter lot, which ran like this:

> Harvest every year; but yearly—nothing.
> Borrow money yearly; yearly still in debt.
> Broken huts, small basins, crooked pots;
> Half an acre of land; five graves.

Politically, Stone Wall Village was in the hands of its village chief, a landlord named Wang Chang-ying. Although his personal characteristics are not germane to this story, it may be mentioned in passing that Landlord Wang was fifty years old, that he wore a small goatee and smoked a long-handled water pipe. In fair weather, it was said that he promenaded on the streets and beat any child who was unfortunate enough to bump into him. At the sight of him, many of the village poor would immediately run indoors.

Wang's possessions included sixty-five acres (no one else owned more than three) of irrigated land, the riverside mill, a large store of grain, one wife, one son, one daughter, one daughter-in-law, and a vengeful nature. . . .

Such was the condition of Stone Wall Village when the Chinese Revolution suddenly descended on it. There had been vague stories of this revolution in the village; there had been murmurings about the [Communist] 8th Route Army, about a thing called democracy, and about villages where there were no landlords and everyone had an equal amount of land. But the people had listened to these rumors with only half an ear; they were poor and fated to be poor; they did not want to fight anybody, they only wanted to be left alone.

Landlord Wang had also heard these rumors; he did not take them seriously either. But as a precaution, he used to tell the people: "Flesh cut from others won't stick to your own body." The people, however, did not need this warning: they had no intention of moving against Landlord Wang.

Nevertheless, the Revolution came to Stone Wall Village.

It did not come like a flash of swift lightning; for a revolution like everything else moves slowly in China. Nor did it announce itself like a clap of thunder, with the beat of drums, the sound of rifle fire, or hot slogans shouted on the country air.

To be more exact, five men brought the Revolution to Stone Wall Village. They were not soldiers, nor were they Communist Party members. One had been a schoolteacher, another a student, a third a waiter, a fourth a shop assistant, and the fifth a farmer. They were all members of the Ho-hsien County Salvation Association, and their job was to "overturn" Stone Wall Village.

"Overturn" is a term of the Chinese Revolution that came into being after the surrender of the Japanese. In Communist terminology, it means to turn over the social, political, and economic life of every village, to overturn feudalism and establish democracy, to overturn superstition and establish reason. The first step of the overturning movement is to "struggle" against the landlords and divide the land.

To do this sounds easy. You have the guns and the power, and you just tell the landlord to give a share of his land to the people. But it is never that easy. In Stone Wall Village, there was no army, there was no militia. The 8th Route Army was far to the south. Even the guerrillas had gone elsewhere. Landlord Wang was the power, and the people were afraid of him.

The leader of the Ho-hsien Salvation team was a thirty-one-year-old cadre [official], the son of a bankrupt rich farmer, named Chou Yu-chuan. When Chou and his fellow workers arrived in Stone Wall Village, they posted proclamations . . . announcing that every village had the right to elect its own officials and that land rents and rates of interest should be reduced. Then they called a meeting to explain these proclamations, but the people listened only half-heartedly, kept their mouths tightly shut, and went home without speaking further to the cadres.

For several days, the cadres went individually among the people, asking them about local conditions and their own lives, but no one would talk. Whenever a cadre approached a group of people, they would break apart and move away. One or two men cornered alone admitted they were afraid of the landlord.

Under these conditions, the cadres could not carry on their work, so they decided to seek out one of the poorer men in the village and talk to him alone and in secret.

At this time, Chou and another cadre were living in a cave next door to one occupied by a tenant farmer named Ma Chiu-tze. Ma had bought his cave before the Japanese war with six dollars earned by his wife spinning thread. Now his wife was sick, and Ma often came to the cadres' cave and slept on the same *k'ang* with them. During the night, the three men always talked.

Ever since the Ch'ing dynasty [1644–1911], Ma revealed, his family had been poor tenants, renting land and never having any of their own. Every year, he raised eight *piculs* [one *picul* equals 133 pounds] of millet, and every year he had to give four of these *piculs* to Landlord Wang. He could afford no medicine for his wife, who he feared was dying. Two years before, his father had died, and he had not been able to buy the old man a coffin but had to wrap him in straw. Now he was thirty-five and he was still poor and it looked as if he would always be poor. "I guess I have a bad brain," he would say in summing up the reasons for his poverty.

Then the cadres would ask: "Are you poor because you have a bad brain or because your father left you no property?"

"I guess that's the reason; my father left me no property."

"Really, is that the reason?" asked the cadres. "Let us make an account. You pay four *piculs* of grain every year to the landlord. Your family has rented land for sixty years. That's

Chiang K'ai-shek in 1931, when, as leader of the Nationalist (Kuomintang) Army and government, he tried to destroy the Communist movement. He was finally defeated by the Communists in 1949. (From the collection of Edward C. Carter, at the University of Vermont.)

240 *piculs* of grain. If you had not given this to the landlord, you would be rich. The reason you are poor, then, is because you have been exploited by the landlord."

They would talk like this for hours, and Ma would finally acknowledge that he was exploited by the landlord. . . .

Ma agreed that the landlords had to be overthrown before there could be any happiness for the poor, but he was only half convinced of his own statements. There was yet a long distance between words and action, and the weight of two thousand years of tradition lay very heavily on Ma, as on most Chinese peasants.

For fifteen days, the cadres talked with Ma. In this period, they had twenty-three formal talks with him besides the numerous evening talks. They conversed with other farmers in the village, but Ma was the most "active" element. From this it can be seen it is not easy to stir a Chinese peasant.

Stone Wall Village Turns Over

PART II

Editor's Introduction: The cadres who came to Stone Wall Village found that it is not easy to rouse a Chinese peasant to revolt. But slowly, together with their first convert, Ma, they convinced other poor peasants to join in the struggle against landlord Wang. As a warning to the would-be "overturners," the landlord had one of them, a man named Original Fortune Lee, murdered; thus the landlord drew the first blood.

As the account of events in Stone Wall Village continues, this incident has just taken place. Why did the peasants eventually rise up and overthrow Wang?

AFTER THE MURDER of Original Fortune Lee, the people went about in terror and shut up again like clams. Even those who had attended the second meeting now said: "We haven't begun to struggle with the landlord, but one of us is gone already."

The cadres were very much surprised by the murder. They thought they had been too careless and had not placed enough belief in the peasants' fears. They also thought a hand grenade might be thrown at any time into their meeting cave. Their biggest fear, however, was that the peasants would give up the overturning movement altogether. Therefore, they decided to hold a memorial meeting in honor of Original Fortune Lee and by this meeting to mobilize the people. . . .

One hundred people of Stone Wall Village attended this meeting, but Landlord Wang did not come. . . . The memorial meeting lasted four hours. After it was over, another meeting was called to decide how to continue "overturning." Only six farmers came to this meeting. No one said directly that he was afraid to attend, but they weakly gave the excuse: "I have a little work to do."

The six men, however, decided that because of the murder they would have to "settle" with Landlord Wang immediately.

At the end of five days, thirty farmers mobilized by the other six gathered in the cave for another meeting. Until nearly midnight, they told stories of how they had suffered at the landlord's hands.

Suddenly, someone said: "Maybe Wang will run away."

"Let's get him tonight," said several farmers at once.

After some discussion, they all trooped out of the cave and started a march on Landlord Wang's home. Among the thirty men, there was one rifle and three hand grenades.

The marching farmers separated into two groups. One climbed on top of the cliffs and worked along the cave roofs until they were over the courtyard. The others marched directly to the gate, knocked loudly, and commanded the landlord to open up.

Wang's wife answered the door and announced that her husband was not at home. Refusing to believe her, the peasants made a search and discovered a secret passage behind a cupboard. Descending through an underground tunnel, they found Wang cowering in a subterranean cave. They took him away and locked him up overnight. . . .

[The next] day, a mass meeting was called in a great square field south of the town, not far from the river. About eighty people came to complain against Wang, while the rest of the village watched—among them Wang's wife and daughter.

In the course of the morning and afternoon, the crowd accused the landlord of many crimes, including betraying resistance members to the Japanese, robbing them of grain, forcing them into labor gangs. At last, he was asked if he admitted the accusations.

"All these things I have done," he said, "but really it was not myself who did it, but the Japanese."

He could not have chosen worse words. Over the fields now sounded an angry roar, as of the sea, and the crowd broke into a wild fury. Everybody shouted at once, proclaiming against the landlord's words. Even the nonparticipating bystanders warmed to something akin to anger.

Then, above the tumult of the crowd, came a voice louder than the rest, shouting: "Hang him up!"

The chairman of the meeting and the cadres were disregarded. For all that the crowd noticed, they did not exist.

The crowd boiled around Wang, and somewhere a rope went swishing over a tree. Willing hands slung one end of the rope around Wang's waist. Other eager hands gave the rope a jerk. Wang rose suddenly and came to a halt in mid-air about three feet above the earth. And there he hung, his head down, his stomach horizontal and his legs stretched out—a perfect illustration of what the Chinese call a "duck's swimming form."

About his floating body, the crowd foamed, anger wrinkling their foreheads and curses filling their mouths. Some bent down and spit in the landlord's eyes, and others howled into his ears.

As he rose from the ground, the landlord felt a terror that mounted higher as his position became more uncomfortable. Finally, he could bear it no longer and shouted: "Put me down. I know my wrongs. I admit everything."

The spite of the crowd, however, was not so easily assuaged, and they only answered the landlord's pleas with shouts: "Pull him up! He's too low! Higher! Higher!"

After a while, the anger of the people abated and cooler heads counseled. "If we let him die now, we won't be able to settle accounts with him." Then they allowed him to come down for a rest.

At this point, the wife of Original Fortune Lee came up close to Wang and said in a plaintive voice: "Somebody killed my husband. Was it you?"

Wang's face, which had grown red from hanging in the air, slowly was drained of all color. "No, I did not do it," he said.

"Tell the truth," said the crowd. "You can admit everything to us and nothing will happen. But if you don't tell us the truth, we will hang you up again."

"No, it was not me."

These words were hardly out of his mouth before someone jerked on the rope and the landlord flew into the air again. This time the crowd let him hang for a long while. Unable to bear the pain, Wang finally said: "Let me down. I'll speak."

Then, between sobs and sighs, he told how he and his son had seized Original Fortune Lee as he was walking home from the meeting, tied his hands together, held his head under water until he was dead, and then had thrown him in the river, thinking he would float away.

A cry of rage went up as Wang finished speaking.

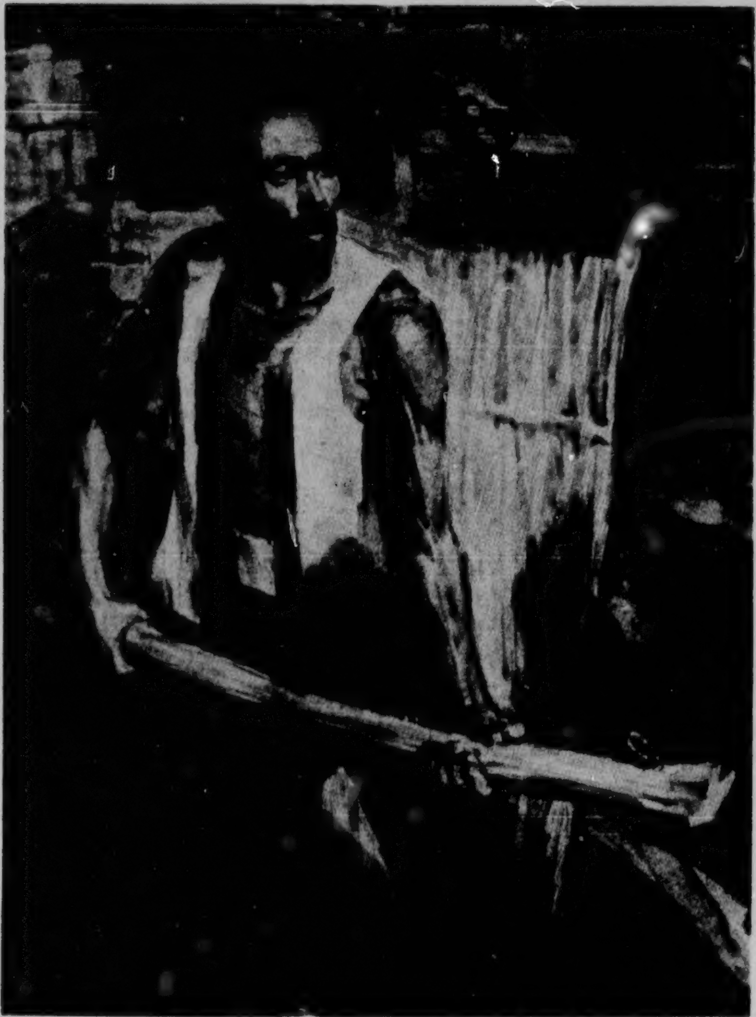
"You've already killed three of our men in the war," said Liu Kwang. "That could be excused. But now your own life can never repay us for the crimes you've done.". . .

A shout went up from the crowd as Landlord Wang was led to the field. Three guards marched him, pale and shaking, to a willow tree, where he was bound up. With his back against the tree, the landlord looked once at the crowd but quickly bent his head toward the ground again.

A slight shiver of apprehension went through the audience. They could not believe their enemy was helpless here before them. He was the lamb led to slaughter, but they could not quite believe they were going to kill him.

Ma Chiu-tze stepped before the crowd and called for attention.

"Now the time has come for our revenge," he announced in a trembling voice. "In what way shall we take revenge on this sinful landlord? We shall kill him."



A peasant strikes back. (From *Chinese Literature*, No. 3. Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1972.)

As he said this, he turned around and slapped Wang sharply across the face.

The crack of palm against cheek rang like a pistol shot on the morning air. A low animal moan broke from the crowd, and it leaped into action.

The landlord looked up as he heard the crowd rushing on him. Those nearest saw his lips move and heard him say: "Two words, two words, please."

The man closest shouted: "Don't let him speak!" and in the same breath swung his hoe, tearing the clothes from the bound man's chest and ripping open the lower portion of his body.

The landlord gave one chilling shriek and then bowed his head in resignation. The crowd was on him like beasts. Their faces had turned yellow and their eyes rolled. A big farmer swung his pig knife and plunged it directly into the landlord's heart. His body quivered—even the tree shook—then slumped, but still the farmer drew his knife in and out, again and again and yet once again.

Landlord Wang was quickly dead, but the rage of the crowd would not abate.

The field rang with the shouts of maddened people.

"It is not enough to kill him."

"We must put him in the open air."

"We must not allow him to be buried for three days."

But such convulsive passions do not last long. They burn themselves out. Slowly, the anger of the crowd cooled. The body of the landlord might rot in the open air, and it were better that his wife and daughter be allowed to get him.

That evening, as the sun was going down behind the mountain, the landlord's wife and daughter brought a mule cart slowly across the field to where their husband and father lay. They wept no tears but silently lifted the mutilated body into the cart and drove away.

Few saw them come and few saw them go. And no one said a word. For there was nothing left to say. The struggle against the landlord was ended.

Stone Wall Village had turned over.

"It's Terrible" or "It's Fine"

Editor's Introduction: Were the rage and violence of the peasants of Stone Wall Village necessary? Were they just? Your answer depends on your conception of necessity and justice. "Necessary" for what? "Just" by what standards?

People and nations through the ages have tried to justify violence; the bloodiest wars in history were fought in the name of justice, freedom, religion, even love.

The revolutionary must weigh the violence of overturning the old society against the violence of keeping it. In traditional China, for centuries there was at least one famine a year, on the average, in some part of the country. A famine in northwest China from 1928 to 1930 killed an estimated three to six million people. In 1943 alone, a famine in one province, Honan, killed three million. Incredibly, while some people were dying, others were hoarding grain. While some peasants sold their land and even their children for the price of a meal, unscrupulous landlords took advantage of the low prices to get rich.

Today the population of China is much bigger than ever before, but no one starves, because there was a violent revolution. Mao Tse-tung, the leader of that revolution, worked for years to overturn the landlord system. He wrote "It's Terrible" or "It's Fine" in 1927, in the very early stages of the land revolution. What does he say about revolutionary violence? Do you agree with his sentiments?

Mao Tse-tung, *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung*, Vol. I (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1965), pp. 26–28; abridged.

Mao Tse-tung talking to peasants in the 1930s.

THE PEASANTS' REVOLT disturbed the gentry's sweet dreams. When the news from the countryside reached the cities, it caused immediate uproar among the gentry. Soon after my arrival in Changsha, I met all sorts of people and picked up a good deal of gossip. From the middle social strata upwards to the . . . right-wingers, there was not a single person who did not sum up the whole business in the phrase "It's terrible!" Under the impact of the views of the "It's terrible!" school then flooding the city, even quite revolutionary-minded people became downhearted as they pictured the events in the countryside in their mind's eye; and they were unable to deny the word "terrible." Even quite progressive people said, "Though terrible, it is inevitable in a revolution." In short, nobody could altogether deny the word "terrible."

But . . . the fact is that the great peasant masses have risen to fulfill their historic mission, and that the forces of rural democracy have risen to overthrow the forces of rural feudalism. . . . This is a marvelous feat never before achieved, not . . . in thousands of years. It's fine. It is not "terrible" at all. It is anything but "terrible." "It's terrible!" is obviously a theory for combating the rise of the peasants in the interests of the landlords; it is obviously a theory of the landlord class for preserving the old order of feudalism and obstructing the establishment of the new order of democracy, it is obviously a counterrevolutionary theory. No revolutionary comrade should echo this nonsense.

If your revolutionary viewpoint is firmly established and if you have been to the villages and looked around, you will undoubtedly feel thrilled as never before. Countless thousands of the enslaved—the peasants—are striking down the enemies who battened on their flesh. What the peasants are doing is absolutely right; what they are doing is fine! "It's fine!" is the theory of the peasants and of all other revolutionaries.

Every revolutionary comrade should know that the national revolution requires a great change in the countryside. The Revolution of 1911 [which overthrew the 2000-year-old imperial system and attempted to establish a republic] did not bring about this change; hence its failure. This change is now taking place, and it is an important factor for the completion of the revolution. Every revolutionary comrade must support it, or he will be taking the stand of counterrevolution.

THE QUESTION OF "GOING TOO FAR"

Then there is another section of people who say, "Yes, peasant associations are necessary, but they are going rather too far." This is the opinion of the middle-of-the-roaders. But what is the actual situation?

True, the peasants are in a sense "unruly" in the countryside. Supreme in authority, the peasant association allows the landlord no say and sweeps away his prestige. This amounts to striking the landlord down to the dust and keeping him there. The peasants threaten, "We will put you in the other register!" They fine the local tyrants and evil gentry, they demand contributions from them, and they smash their sedan-chairs. People swarm into the houses of local tyrants and evil gentry who are against the peasant association, slaughter their pigs, and consume their grain. They even loll for a minute or two on the ivory-inlaid beds belonging to the young ladies in these households. . . . At the silghtest provocation, they make arrests, crown the arrested with tall paper hats, and parade them through the villages, saying, "You dirty landlords, now you know who we are!" Doing whatever they like and turning everything upside down, they have created a kind of terror in the countryside. This is what some people call "going too far," or "exceeding the proper limits in righting a wrong," or "really too much."

Such talk may seem plausible, but in fact it is wrong. First, the local tyrants, evil gentry, and lawless landlords have themselves driven the peasants to this. For ages they have used their power to tyrannize the peasants and trample them underfoot; that is why the peasants have reacted so strongly. The most violent revolts and the most serious disorders have invariably occurred in places where the local tyrants, evil gentry, and lawless landlords perpetrated the worst outrages.

The peasants are clear-sighted. Who is bad and who is not, who is the worst and who is not quite so vicious, who deserves severe punishment and who deserves to be let off lightly—the peasants keep clear accounts, and very seldom has the punishment exceeded the crime.

Second, a revolution is not a dinner party, or writing an essay, or painting a picture, or doing embroidery; it cannot be so refined, so leisurely and gentle, so temperate, kind, courteous, restrained, and magnanimous. A revolution is an insurrection, an act of violence by which one class overthrows another. A rural revolution is a revolution by which the peasantry overthrows the power of the feudal landlord class. Without using the greatest force, the peasants cannot possibly overthrow the deep-rooted authority of the landlords, which has lasted for thousands of years. The rural areas need a mighty revolutionary upsurge, for it alone can rouse the people in their millions to become a powerful force.

The Long March

Editor's Introduction: Twenty-two years elapsed between the time Mao wrote "'It's Terrible' or 'It's Fine'" and the Communist conquest of China in 1949. Conditions were right for the Communist movement, but the road to power was not without its twists, turns, and detours.

The Communist Party of China was founded in 1921. It grew slowly in the 1920's, but it did not develop large-scale mass support until the early 1930's, when Mao Tse-tung and General Chu Te established a base in a rural area in south-central China and began to redistribute land.

The Nationalist government, which supported the landlords, turned all its might against the Communists and, after five "extermination campaigns," managed to drive them from their base area in 1934. Those Communists who escaped the Nationalist attack embarked on a 6,000-mile trek, which is now called "the Long March."

The Long March was the turning point in the Chinese Communist movement. Against enormous odds, the Communists marched and fought their way to a safe area in northwest China. In 368 days, an army of tens of thousands with all its equipment covered an average of almost twenty-four miles per day when on the move. They crossed eighteen mountain ranges, five of them perennially snow-capped, and sixty-two rivers. All the while, they fought an average of a skirmish a day and spent fifteen whole days fighting major battles.

Yang Chengwu, "Lightening Attack on the Luting Bridge," in Deirdre and Neale Hunter, *We the Chinese, Voices from China* (New York: Praeger, 1971), pp. 34–41; abridged.

In every area they passed through, they publicized their movement in mass meetings and theatrical performances. More important, they redistributed the land and other property of the landlords to the poor peasants, leaving in their wake thousands of armed peasants and cadres to train guerrilla forces.

The Communists emerged from the Long March with heavy losses, but confident that they had passed the severest of tests and that nothing could prevent their ultimate victory. Today the Long March is celebrated in song and story as the great epic of the Communists' rise to power. It represents a triumph of human will and endurance in overcoming the most difficult obstacles.

Numerous accounts of the March have been collected and widely publicized in China. In the one that follows, a Communist regimental commander who participated in the action recalls the crucial battle for the Lu-ting Bridge, which crosses the swift Ta-tu River. Had the Communists not captured the bridge, they almost surely would have been trapped and destroyed by Chiang K'ai-shek's troops. As the narrative begins, the Communist troops on one side of the Ta-tu River are racing some of Chiang K'ai-shek's troops (the enemy in the story) on the other. Each army is trying to reach the Lu-ting Bridge first.

What lessons does this chapter in the great epic of the Long March hold for Chinese who read it today?❧

SUDDENLY A FEW flickering lights appeared on the opposite side of the river. The next moment, they grew into a long string of torches. The enemy troops were making a forced march by torchlight! I immediately conferred with our regimental commander, our chief of staff, and our Party secretary. We decided that we, too, would carry torches. Should the enemy signal across the river and ask us to identify ourselves, we would pretend we were the three enemy battalions we had already defeated. We directed our bugler to be prepared to sound the calls used by the enemy. Since the enemy troops were all [from the province of Szechuan], we picked some Szechuan men from our own ranks and from the prisoners to shout back replies to any questions.

We bought reeds from the folks in the hamlet, made torches, and issued one to each man, with instructions that they were not to be wasted.

Our aim was to cover at least three miles per hour. I had a leg wound that was causing me some inconvenience, and the comrades, especially the regimental commander, urged me to continue on horseback. But I decided it was my duty as an officer to set an example. Instead of riding, I issued a challenge, "We will all march together, comrades. Let's see who walks the fastest. Let's see who gets to the Lu-ting Bridge first!"

Taking up the challenge, the men held their torches high and pressed forward.

Torchlight crimsoned the waters of the Ta-tu. Our lights and those of the enemy writhed along the river banks like two fiery dragons.

The sharp notes of an enemy bugle rang out, followed by the cry, "Which unit are you?" Our bugler blew the necessary call, and our Szechuan men shouted a reply. The enemy was fooled. They never suspected that the gallant Red Army they hoped to wipe out was marching parallel with them.

They stayed with us for almost ten miles. Around midnight, the rain grew heavier, and the torches on the opposite bank disappeared. We guessed they had found the going too hard and encamped. The news spread quickly through the regiment, causing many comments among the men: "This is our chance! March on! Faster!" In single file, we pushed on for all we were worth.

The rain pelted down mercilessly and the mountain gullies turned into rushing torrents. The twisting path became as slippery as oil, so that our walking staffs were of little use. We could not march; we slipped and slithered, scrambled and crawled along. And when we came to an even stretch, the weary men would doze off as they walked. A soldier would come to a halt and the comrade behind would push him and yell, "Keep going! Keep going!" The man would awaken and hurry to catch up. Finally the men took off their puttees [leg wrappings] and tied themselves together in a long chain.

In this way we kept up the forced march all night and reached our destination on time. In twenty-four hours, in addition to fighting and repairing wrecked bridges, we had covered eighty miles. This was truly an exploit of winged feet.

We first captured the west bank and the western approaches to the Lu-ting Bridge. Having occupied several buildings and a Catholic church, our men prepared for the coming battle. Regimental Commander Wang and I went out with the battalion and company officers to study the situation. We were taken aback by the difficulties to be overcome. The river's reddish waters cascaded down the mountain gorges of the upper reaches and pounded against ugly boulders in midstream, tossing white foam high into the air. The roar of the rushing water was deafening. Fording or crossing in boats was out of the question.

We examined the bridge. It was made of iron chains, thirteen in number, each link as thick as a rice bowl. Two chains on each side served as hand-railings; the other nine formed a catwalk. Planks had originally been laid across these, but they had been taken by the enemy, leaving only the black chains hanging in mid-air.

At the head of the bridge, on a stone slab, two lines from a poem were inscribed:

Towering mountains flank the Lu-ting Bridge,
Their summits rise a hundred miles into the clouds.

The city of Lu-ting lay directly beyond the eastern end of the bridge. It was built half along the shore and half on the mountain slope and was surrounded by a wall over twenty feet high. The west gate of this wall was just past the end of the bridge. The city was garrisoned by two enemy regiments, and strong fortifications had been built along the mountainside. Machine-gun emplacements close to the bridge kept us under continual fire, and mortar shells rained down on us.

The enemy was confident that this position was impregnable. "Let's see you fly across!" they yelled. "We'll give up our arms if you can do it!"

Our soldiers shouted back: "We don't want your arms. We want your bridge!"

Back from our reconnaissance, we first positioned a battalion to cover the path on the other side of the river. That was the only way enemy reinforcements could come. Then we went round our companies to begin the battle rallies. Morale was high. Each company submitted a list of volunteers for an assault party, and each wanted to be given the honor of taking the bridge. . . .

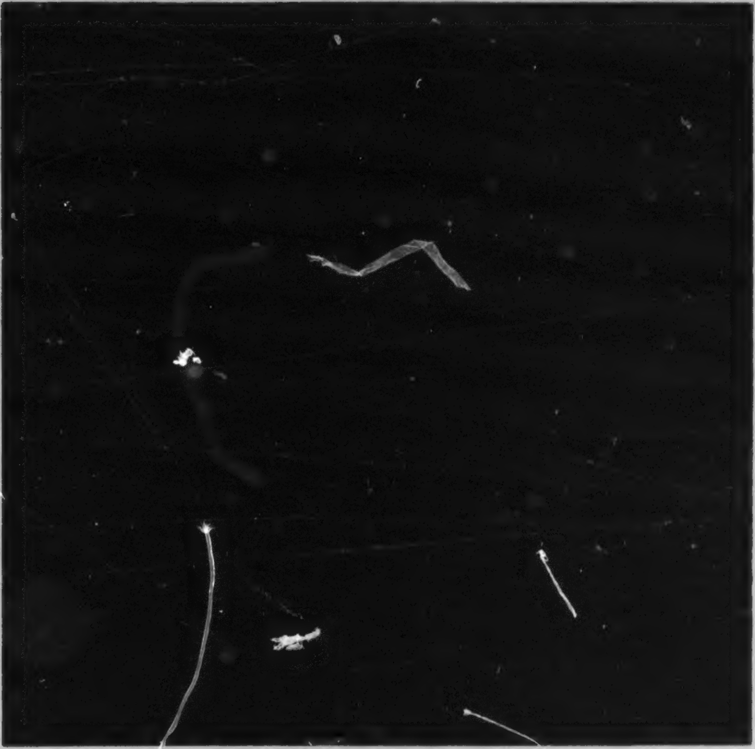
The attack began at four o'clock in the afternoon. The regimental commander and I directed it from the west end of the bridge. The buglers gathered together to sound the charge, and we opened up with every weapon we had. The sound of the bugles, the firing, and the shouts of the men reverberated through the valley.

Then the twenty-two heroes, led by Commander Liao, climbed out cross the swaying chains in the teeth of intense enemy fire. Each man carried a tommy gun, a broadsword, and twelve hand grenades. Behind them came the officers and men of the Third Company, each carrying a heavy plank as well as full battle gear. They fought and laid planks at the same time.

Just as the assault force reached the eastern bridgehead, huge flames sprang into the sky outside the city gate. The enemy was trying to throw a wall of fire across our path. The blaze licked fiercely around the end of the bridge.

The outcome of the attack was hanging by a hair. The assault squad hesitated for a few seconds, then plunged boldly into the flames. Commander Liao's cap caught fire, but he threw it away and fought on. The others also dashed through the flames and smashed their way into the city. In the street fighting that followed, the enemy brought their full weight to bear against our gallant force. Our men fought until all their ammunition was spent. There was a critical pause as the Third Company came charging to their rescue. Then Regimental Commander Wang and I sped across the bridge with our reinforcements and entered the city.

In two hours, we had destroyed over half of the enemy's



Storming the Lu-ting Bridge over the Ta-tu River. Oil painting.

two regiments, and the remainder broke ranks and scattered. By dusk we had completely occupied the city of Lu-ting and were in control of the bridge. . . .

General Liu examined every detail of the iron chains as if he were trying to memorize the entire bridge. On the way back, he stopped in the middle and leaned over the side chains to look down on the turbulent waters of the Ta-tu below. Tapping his foot on the boards, he murmured, "We've spent plenty of blood and energy to get you, Lu-ting Bridge, but we've got you!"

The following day, Commander Lin Piao marched up with our main force. . . . Then Chairman Mao arrived, and thousands of our troops marched across the Lu-ting Bridge. We had conquered the seething barrier of the Ta-tu River.

Editor's Postscript: The Communists arrived in northwest China after the Long March with only about 30,000 men. They occupied an area that was easy to defend but sparsely populated, and noted for its poverty. Fewer than one million people lived in the Communist area in early 1937. But in 1949, only twelve years later, the Communists controlled the whole China mainland. Only Taiwan (Formosa) and a few other islands remained in the hands of Chiang K'ai-shek and the former government of China.

The success of the Communists can be explained by a number of factors. The war with Japan from 1937 to 1945 disrupted the country. And during the war, Chiang K'ai-shek's government became corrupt and inefficient. But the main reason for the Communist victory is summarized in a few words from a study made by the U.S. War Department (now called the Department of Defense) in 1945:

> Practically all impartial observers emphasized that the Chinese Communists comprise the most efficient, politically well-organized, disciplined, and constructive group in China today. This opinion is well supported by facts. It is largely because of their political and military skill, superior organization, and progressive attitude, which has won for them a popular support no other party or group in China can equal, that they have been expanding their influence throughout the past seven years.*

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* Lyman P. Van Slyke, ed., *The Chinese Communist Movement, A Report of the U.S. War Department,* July, 1945 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1968), pp. 7–8.

Maoist Ethics—
The "Three Constantly Read Articles"

Editor's Introduction: The "progressive attitude" attributed to the Communists by the U.S. War Department study in 1945 is illustrated in "The Three Constantly Read Articles," all of which were written by Mao Tse-tung in the 1930s and 1940s. The Communists were convinced that a genuine and lasting revolution would depend not only on institutional change, such as land reform, but also on a change in the way people think.

Like their Confucian predecessors, the Communists are very concerned with thought, for they believe that ideas and action are closely related. "Correct" ideas will lead to "correct" actions and vice versa. In the past, as in the present, there has been a single orthodoxy in China with little tolerance for deviation.

The three short pieces in this chapter were chosen by Mao Tse-tung from the hundreds of articles he had written as most representative of the values which he hoped would provide the guidelines for the new China. Originally addressed to members of the Communist Party, they later became essential reading for a nation. What are the values expressed?

Mao Tse-tung, *Five Articles by Chairman Mao Tse-tung* (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1967), pp. 1-19; abridged.

Serve the People

September 8, 1944

IF WE HAVE shortcomings, we are not afraid to have them pointed out and criticized, because we serve the people. Anyone, no matter who, may point out our shortcomings. If he is right, we will correct them. If what he proposes will benefit the people, we will act upon it. . . .

If, in the interests of the people, we persist in doing what is right and correct what is wrong, our ranks will surely thrive.

We hail from all corners of the country and have joined together for a common revolutionary objective. And we need the vast majority of the people with us on the road to this objective. Today, we already lead base areas with a population of 91 million, but this is not enough; to liberate the whole nation more are needed. In times of difficulty we must not lose sight of our achievements, must see the bright future and must pluck up our courage. The Chinese people are suffering; it is our duty to save them and we must exert ourselves in struggle. Wherever there is struggle there is sacrifice, and death is a common occurrence.

But we have the interests of the people and the sufferings of the great majority at heart, and when we die for the people it is a worthy death. Nevertheless, we should do our best to avoid unnecessary sacrifices. Our cadres must show concern for every soldier, and all people in the revolutionary ranks must care for each other, must love and help each other. . . .

In Memory of Norman Bethune

December 21, 1939

Comrade Norman Bethune, a member of the Communist Party of Canada, was around fifty when he was sent by the Communist parties of Canada and the United States to China; he made light of traveling thousands of miles to help us in our War of Resistance against Japan. He arrived in Yenan in the spring of last year, went to work in the Wutai Mountains, and to our great sorrow died a martyr at his post.

What kind of spirit is this that makes a foreigner selflessly adopt the cause of the Chinese people's liberation as his own? It is the spirit of internationalism, the spirit of communism, from which every Chinese Communist must learn. . . .

Comrade Bethune's spirit, his utter devotion to others without any thought of self, was shown in his boundless sense of responsibility in his work and his boundless warmheartedness toward all comrades and the people. Every Communist must learn from him. There are not a few people who are irresponsible in their work, preferring the light to the heavy, shoving the heavy loads on to others and choosing the easy ones for themselves. At every turn they think of themselves before others. When they make some small contribution, they swell with pride and brag about it for fear that others will not know. They feel no warmth toward comrades and the people but are cold, indifferent, and apathetic. In fact such people are not Communists, or at least cannot be counted as true Communists. No one who returned from the front failed to express admiration for Bethune whenever his name was mentioned, and none remained unmoved by his spirit. . . . Every Communist must learn this true communist spirit from Comrade Bethune.

Comrade Bethune was a doctor, the art of healing was his profession, and he was constantly perfecting his skill, which stood very high in the 8th Route Army's medical service. His example is an excellent lesson for those people who wish to change their work the moment they see something different, and for those who despise technical work as of no consequence or as promising no future.

Comrade Bethune and I met only once. Afterward he wrote me many letters. But I was busy, and I wrote him only one letter and do not even know if he ever received it. I am deeply grieved over his death. Now we are all commemorating him, which shows how profoundly his spirit inspires everyone. We must all learn the spirit of absolute selflessness from him. With this spirit everyone can be very useful to the people. A man's ability may be great or small, but if he has this spirit, he is already noble-minded and pure, a man of moral integrity and above vulgar interests, a man who is of value to the people.

The Foolish Old Man Who Removed the Mountains

June 11, 1945

. . . There is an ancient Chinese fable called "The Foolish Old Man Who Removed the Mountains." It tells of an old man who lived in northern China long, long ago and was known as the Foolish Old Man of North Mountain.

Moving the mountains.

His house faced south, and beyond his doorway stood the two great peaks, Tai-hang and Wang-wu, obstructing the way. With great determination, he led his sons in digging up these mountains hoe in hand. Another graybeard, known as the Wise Old Man, saw them and said derisively, "How silly of you to do this! It is quite impossible for you few to dig up these two huge mountains." The Foolish Old Man replied, "When I die, my sons will carry on; when they die, there will be my grandsons, and then their sons and grandsons, and so on to infinity. High as they are, the mountains cannot grow any higher and with every bit we dig, they will be that much lower. Why can't we clear them away?"

Having refuted the Wise Old Man's wrong view, he went on digging every day, unshaken in his conviction. God was moved by this, and he sent down two angels, who carried the mountains away on their backs.

Today, two big mountains lie like a dead weight on the Chinese people. One is imperialism, the other is feudalism. The Chinese Communist Party has long made up its mind to dig them up. We must persevere and work unceasingly, and we, too, will touch God's heart. Our God is none other than the masses of the Chinese people. If they stand up and dig together with us, why can't these two mountains be cleared away? . . .

Studying the "Three Constantly Read Articles." (From *Jen-min hua-pao,* 1970, No. 12, p. 53.)

The Traditional Family Ethic

❧ *Editor's Introduction:* The values expressed by Mao in the "Three Constantly Read Articles" are both a product of, and a departure from, traditional Chinese ethics. The Chinese have always rejected individualism, so valued in the West, considering it synonymous with selfishness.

The selfless, collective ethic espoused by Mao is also found in the family ethic of traditional China. Mao simply extended it to a broader social context, but in so doing he signaled a monumental change.

For thousands of years the family was the basic social unit in China. Honor and obedience to one's parents and older relatives was the cardinal virtue. The collective family was the principal unit for welfare and social security. The government did little or nothing to provide health insurance or old age pensions. That was left to families. It was an unforgivable breach of ethics to neglect one's parents in their retirement.

To strengthen the family unit, the Chinese often formed clans composed of several generations and many branches of the male line of a family. Large clans included hundreds of members. A certain amount of land would be owned communally and used to support an ancestral temple, a school, a welfare fund, commercial operations, and so on. Clan rules defined proper behavior for all members. To violate those rules and be expelled from the clan was the worst thing that could happen to one of its members, for an expelled person would become isolated and trusted by no one.

Aside from its obligation to obey the laws of the land, the family owed little allegiance to anyone. Rich families felt but slight obligation to aid the poor, and indeed felt justified in pressing their economic and political advantages over them.

The collective ethic of the Communists was an attempt to expand the unit of social concern from the family to the whole society. The implications of that change are suggested in the following selection written in 1935 by Lin Yu-tang, a man in love with traditional Chinese culture but also capable of seeing its weaknesses. Compare his description of the old family ethic with the values espoused by Mao Tse-tung.

THE CHINESE ARE . . . family-minded, not social-minded, and the family mind is only a form of magnified selfishness. It is curious that the word "society" does not exist as an idea in Chinese thought. . . . "Public spirit" is a new term, so is "civic consciousness," and so is "social service." There are no such commodities in China. . . .

To a Chinese, social work always looks like meddling with other people's business. A man enthusiastic for social reform or in fact for any kind of public work always looks a little bit ridiculous. We discount his sincerity. We cannot understand him. What does he mean by going out of his way to do all this work? Is he courting publicity? Why is he not loyal to his family, and why does he not get official promotion and help his family first? We decide he is young, or else he is a deviation from the normal human type.

There were always such deviations from type . . . but they were invariably of the bandit or vagabond class, unmarried, . . . willing to jump into the water to save an unknown drowning child. (Married men in China do not do that.) Or else they were married men who died penniless and made their wives and children suffer. . . .

The best modern educated Chinese still cannot understand why Western women should organize a "Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals." Why bother about the dogs,

Lin Yu-t'ang, *My Country and My People* (New York: John Day, 1935), pp. 172-83; abridged. Copyright © 1935 by Lin Yu-t'ang.

(Courtesy Jean Elliott Johnson.)

why do they not stay at home and nurse their babies? We decide that these women have no children and therefore have nothing better to do, which is probably often true. The conflict is between the family mind and the social mind. If one scratches deep enough, one always finds the family mind at work.

For the family system is the root of Chinese society, from which all Chinese social characteristics derive. . . . It touches us even in very personal ways. It takes the right of contractin marriage from our hands and gives it to our parents; it makes us marry, not wives, but "daughters-in-law," and it makes our wives give birth, not to children, but to "grandchildren." It multiplies the obligations of the bride a hundredfold. It makes it rude for a young couple to close the door of their room in the family house in the daytime, and makes privacy an unknown word in China. . . .

The Doctrine of Social Status, as Confucianism has been popularly called, is the social philosophy behind the family system. It is the doctrine that makes for social order in China. It is the principle of social structure and social control at the same time. . . .

In theory at least, Confucius did not mean family consciousness to degenerate into a form of magnified selfishness at the cost of social integrity. . . . He meant the moral training in the family as the basis for general moral training, and he planned that from the general moral training a society should emerge which would live happily and harmoniously together. Only in this sense can one understand the tremendous emphasis placed on "filial piety" [respect for parents], which is regarded as the "first of all virtues.". . .

Confucius said:

> The reason why the gentleman teaches filial piety is not because it is to be seen in the home and everyday life. He teaches filial piety in order that man may respect all those who are fathers in the world. He teaches brotherliness in the younger brother, in order that man may respect all those who are elder brothers in the world. He teaches the duty of the subject, in order that man may respect all who are rulers in the world.

Again, Confucius said:

> Those who love their parents dare not show hatred to others. Those who respect their parents dare not show rudeness to others. . . .

Every family in China is really a communistic unit, with the principle of "do what you can and take what you need" guiding its functions. Mutual helpfulness is developed to a very high degree, encouraged by a sense of moral obligation and family honor. Sometimes a brother will cross the sea thousands of miles away to redeem the honor of a bankrupt brother. A well-placed and comparatively successful man generally contributes the greater, if not the entire, share of the expenses of the whole household, and it is common practice, worthy of no special merit, for a man to send his nephews to school. A successful man, if he is an official, always gives the best jobs

Several generations under one roof—a traditional Chinese ideal. From Robert Goldston, *The Rise of Red China*, Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1967.

to his relatives; and if there are not ready jobs, he can create sinecure ones. Thus sinecurism and nepotism developed, which, coupled with economic pressure, became an irresistible force, undermining . . . any political reform movement. The force is so great that repeated efforts at reform, with the best of intentions, have proved unsuccessful.

To look at it kindly, nepotism is no worse than favoritism of other sorts. An official does not place only his nephews in the office, but he also has to place the nephews of other high officials . . . who write him letters of recommendation. Where is he going to place them except in sinecure posts and "advisorships"? . . .

It is quite natural that charity should begin at home. For the family system must be taken as the Chinese traditional system of insurance against unemployment. Every family takes care of its own unemployed, and . . . its next best work is to find employment for them. It is better than charity because it teaches in the less lucky members a sense of independence, and the members so helped in turn help other members of the family. Besides, the minister who robs the nation to feed the family, either for the present or for the next three or four generations, by amassing half a million to ten million or more dollars, is only trying to glorify his ancestors and be a "good" man of the family. . . .

Certain social characteristics arise from the family system, apart from nepotism and official corruption. They may be summed up as the lack of social discipline. It defeats any form of social organization, as it defeats the civil-service system through nepotism. It makes a man "sweep the snow in front of his door, and not bother about the frost on his neighbor's roof." This is not so bad. What is worse is that it makes a man throw his refuse outside his neighbor's door. . . .

Religion in Traditional China

The gods? Worship them by all means. But if you had only Lord Kuan and the Goddess of Mercy and no peasant association, could you have overthrown the local tyrants and evil gentry? The gods and goddesses are indeed miserable objects. You have worshipped them for centuries, and they have not overthrown a single one of the local tyrants or evil gentry for you! Now you want to have your rent reduced. Let me ask how will you go about it. Will you believe in the gods or in the peasant associations?

MAO TSE-TUNG, 1927

☙ *Editor's Introduction:* Changing the way people think requires more than a transformation of secular values. It also means changing religious ideas and institutions.

The Communists are atheists; they do not believe in any god or supernatural force. Rather, they assert that only living beings have ideas, and that those ideas did not exist before life on earth. In other words, they do not believe in a Grand Idea or master plan of God that existed before material reality and shaped it. Furthermore, they assert that there are no gods to help or to punish human beings. They believe that people make their own history in accordance with material reality. History and environment are what influence ideas and actions.

Francis Hsu, *Americans and Chinese* (New York: Doubleday Natural History Press, 1972), pp. 226—42; abridged.

Karl Marx, after studying history, concluded that human society is moving toward Communism—that is, toward a system in which everyone is equal and no person or group exploits another. The future can be foreseen to some extent, Marx felt, because of trends apparent in historical development so far, not because of a divine plan.

Mao Tse-tung, among all the followers of Marx, has particularly stressed that Communism is not predetermined. There is no mysterious force that makes the realization of Communism certain. And while firmly believing that Communist egalitarianism is good and worth struggling to achieve, he constantly reiterates that only humans can bring it about. To do so, they must get rid of all their superstitions and traditional ideas about gods and fate.

To understand what this task entails in the Chinese context, we must put aside for the moment our Western notions about religion. We must begin with an awareness that the Chinese were not Christians or Jews. Hard as the Christian missionaries tried before the Communists came to power, they never converted more than half of 1 per cent of the population to Christianity. Nor were all Chinese Buddhists, as so many Westerners tend to believe. Buddhism had its day in China as the major religion of the country, but the great age of Buddhism ended by about 900 A.D. In the last Chinese dynasty (1644-1912), Buddhism was actually outlawed but was unofficially tolerated as long as it did not interfere with affairs of state.

The following selection, written by Francis Hsu, a Chinese anthropologist now teaching in the United States, describes the place of Buddhism and other religious beliefs in traditional Chinese society. How do traditional Chinese religious beliefs compare to those in Western society? How would they hinder revolutionary change?

IT IS COMPLETELY inaccurate to describe the Chinese . . . as Buddhists, Taoists, Confucianists, or ancestor-worshippers in the same sense that we classify Americans as Jews, Protestants, or Catholics . . . . [A] Chinese may go to a Buddhist monastery to pray for a male heir, but he may proceed from there to a Taoist shrine where he beseeches a god to cure him of malaria. Ask any number of Chinese what their religion is and the answer of the majority will be that they have no particular religion, or that, since all religions benefit man in one way or another, they are all equally good. Most Chinese temples . . .

are dedicated to the worship of many gods, and few family shrines are a sanctuary for only a single deity. There are many Chinese temples built expressly to house together Confucius, Buddha, and Lao Tze, the founder of Taoism. In prayer meetings staged by several southwestern Chinese communities during World War II, I saw included at many an altar the images of not only the numerous Chinese deities but also of Jesus Christ and Mohammed. . . . For the Chinese way in religion is to be more and more inclusive so that my god, your god, his god, and all gods, whether you or I know anything about them or not, must be equally honored or at least not be the objects of either my contempt or of yours. . . .

In every Chinese village we find a variety of temples all dedicated to the worship of many different gods. A typical village temple usually houses the Goddess of Mercy, who answers all kinds of prayers; the God of Wealth, who is indispensable to all businessmen; the Dragon God, who brings rain in times of drought; and the Earth God . . . , who is the local emissary of the other world. The inventory of gods in city temples is much larger. There are temples housing the God of Literature; Confucius and his seventy-two famous disciples; the God of Agriculture; the God of Medicine; the Goddess of Measles, Eyes, and other ailments or bodily parts; Ch'eng Huang, or God of the District, flanked by courts of the ten judges . . . and the gods who are said to be founders and patron deities of various crafts. . . . No one knows how many gods there are in China. There seems to be no limit to them, and most of them are unrelated to each other. . . .

I do not know of a single city or town in mainland China before 1949, or in Taiwan today, that is without diviners or geomancy readers, physiognomists, phrenologists, mediums, and all kinds of fortunetellers. For a fee, these persons offer to foretell the length of a person's life and his business prospects, or to determine the marriageability of a boy and girl, or to decide on the ritual suitability of a new house site or graveyard. They will often undertake to arrange a meeting or communication with the gods or with one's ancestors. There is literally no question they do not attempt to answer and almost no matter relating to the gods that they refuse to interpret. It is safe to say that no individual of prominence in traditional China failed to have his fate told, not once, but many times, by different professional fortunetellers. . . .

After death, the soul of every Chinese is subject, according to its deserts, to reward, punishment, or both. The courts of the ten judges, each of which successively reviews the merits and demerits of every newly departed soul, are well known among the Chinese for the tortures they may inflict. A soul may be sawed in half, restored, and then boiled in oil, next ground to a mush, then slowly drowned in a river of blood, after which its eyes are poked out and its tongue cut off, and so on ad nauseam. After all of these exasperating experiences,

Hired mourners in a traditional funeral procession. (Photo by Peter J. Seybolt.)

the soul may yet be banished to more suffering in one or all of the numerous hells. Some Chinese sources indicate that there are eighteen hells, one situated on top of the other, while other sources insist that there are many more.

A meritorious person's soul is treated very differently. Immediately after its departure from the body, it is met at the threshold of the world of spirits by a special reception party, playing music and bearing food that has been dispatched by one of the judges. The newcomer progresses from court to court, residing in guest houses at each stopping place. On these occasions he is entertained lavishly for long periods of time and has various honors conferred on him. He may then be offered an appointment as a local god upon earth or as a higher official in the court of the Supreme Ruler. If especially deserving, he may ultimately be entitled to a place of eternal happiness in the Western Paradise. . . .

ANCESTOR WORSHIP

I know of no Chinese, save the relatively few Christians and Mohammedans, who do not adhere to [the cult of ancestor worship.] It is literally the universal religion of China. . . .

Ancestor worship is an active ingredient in every aspect of Chinese society, from the family to the government, from local business to the national economy.

The Chinese have at least three basic assumptions about ancestor worship. First, all living persons owe their fortunes or misfortunes to their ancestors. A man may be a beggar because of his laziness, and this fact may be well known to everyone in the community; but had his ancestors accumulated enough good deeds while they were alive, they probably never would have had such a lazy descendant. A great official may attain prominence by excellence of scholarship and strength of character, and everyone who knows him may testify to these virtues. But his very achievement is evidence of his ancestors' high moral worth. . . .

The second assumption of ancestor worship is that all departed ancestors, like other gods and spirits, have needs that are not different from those of the living. To prevent one's ancestors from degenerating into spiritual vagabonds, it is the duty of every man to provide for his departed ancestors just as faithfully as he provides for his parents while they are alive. Accordingly, the dead, to the limit of the male descendant's financial ability, must be offered food and life-sized paper models of clothing, furniture, sedan chairs, horses, donkeys, cows, and servants, so that the departed may set up house in the other world . . .

This concept explains why a Chinese man or woman who dies without male heirs is an object of public pity. For that person is doomed to an existence as spirit tramps, depending entirely upon handouts from charitable families or consuming the leftovers of better situated spirits. . . .

The third assumption is that the departed ancestors continue, as in life, to assist their relatives in this world, just as their living descendants can also lend a hand to them. That is, a person's present lot may be improved by the spiritual efforts of departed ancestors, and the spiritual welfare or misery of a departed ancestor may likewise be enhanced or mitigated by the worldly actions of living descendants. . . .

[In short, the] Chinese maintain a positive and close relationship with their departed ancestors just as they do with their living kinsmen, while their attitude toward the other gods is neutral and distant, reflecting their attitudes toward the emperor and his officials. . . .

Religion in China Today

Editor's Introduction: When the Communists came to power in 1949, they did not outlaw religion. Much as they disliked it, they realized that beliefs that had been held for hundreds or thousands of years could not be eliminated by a law or by force. The following article from a Chinese newspaper explains the Communists' approach to the problem.

What, specifically, did the Communists find objectionable about traditional religious and superstitious practices in China? What was their policy for dealing with them?

AMONG THE PEOPLE of our country, those who really believe in any religion and are followers of any religion are numerically in the minority. But, among the peasants especially, those who believe in the existence of spirits and gods, in fate, and in such superstition as fortunetelling are still quite numerous. In view of this, we must be good not only at struggling against religious superstitions but also at struggling against all other kinds of ordinary superstitious activities. . . .

In the old society a great number of people lived by swindling money and goods from the laboring people with these superstitious activities and formed specialized occupations of them. They included, for instance, physiognomists, geomancers, fortune-tellers, priestesses, godly men, and priests.

"On the Question of Religion and Superstition," *Jen-min jih-pao* (People's Daily), Peking, August 8, 1963.

Apart from serving the interests of the exploiting class, these themselves constituted a part of the exploiting classes.

After the nationwide liberation, educated and transformed by the Party and the People's Government, some of these people have really changed their occupations and trades and become part of the laboring people. But there are also many who have not yet been thoroughly transformed. When an opportunity presents itself, they will . . . resume their old trades and take advantage of the remnant superstitious thoughts of the masses of the people, mainly the peasants, continuing their activities of swindling the masses of their money and goods and continuing to exploit the people. . . .

Six per cent of the Chinese population belong to national minority groups. Pictured is a Kazakh folk musician. He too is Chinese. (From China Reconstructs, *July, 1973.)*

Among the people of our country, especially the peasants, these ideas are still quite widespread. To varying extents, they still believe that after a man has died, he becomes a ghost. So the thought that ghosts are terrible is still comparatively widespread. Because of this thought, when a man has died, they will burn imitation money, paper clothes, paper horses, paper houses, etc., for him, so that his soul may use them in another world–the underworld. On the Chinese New Year's Day and on festive occasions, as well as on death anniversaries, they still go to cemeteries to offer sacrifices. Some, when they fall sick, will "send off the ghosts," or go to a temple to "make vows." And so forth. These superstitious activities are spontaneous and as a rule have no direct connection with those engaging in superstitious trades. We must strictly distinguish between the people's theist ideas and spontaneous superstitious activities, and the activities of those engaging in superstitious trades who swindle money and goods from the people through superstition. . . .

Our purpose in conducting education in atheism is to persuade people to give up their theism and religious superstitions and gradually become atheists. So we must take the attitude of "honest advice and proper guidance." If we hurt their feelings, they will then not listen to us however sound our reasoning may be. To avoid hurting the feelings of others, we must adhere to the principle of voluntariness. It is up to a man himself to choose between giving up and not giving up his theist ideas and religious superstitions and between accepting and not accepting the atheist thought. Nobody else may apply pressure to force him. Comrade Mao Tse-tung pointed out clearly, "We may not use administrative orders in eliminating religion or force people not to believe in religion. We may not force people [illegible] to believe in Marxism. All problems of an ideological nature can be solved only by means of discussion, criticism, and persuasive education. No attempt may be made to solve them by means of coercion and suppression. . . .

In other words, in conducting propaganda on atheism or opposing religious superstitions, we must absolutely not interfere with others' worship or tamper with the proper religious activities of the believers. On the other hand, the believers and theists, for their part, must not interfere with our conducting education in atheism or our opposing religious superstitions. Only this is the correct attitude.

Maoism as Religion

Editor's Introduction: The Communists have not always adhered to the principle of noninterference with religious activities. Many places of worship have been closed, believers harassed, and priests mistreated. Freedom to practice religion was never extended to the foreign missionaries, who dominated the Christian Church in China. Like other foreigners, most were expelled from China. A few were convicted of espionage and subversion, and were jailed.

The Communists' main effort, however, has been to change old practices gradually through education and by providing beneficial alternatives to old religious practices. For example, better medical facilities and care have greatly reduced reliance on witch doctors; the removal of ancestral remains from family plots to common graveyards has increased the amount of land available for agriculture; and the encouragement of less expensive funerals has lifted a heavy financial burden once considered necessary to honor dead ancestors properly.

In addition, as many people have pointed out, Maoism itself is like a religion in many respects. It has a concept of future paradise (on earth), a savior (Chairman Mao), a set of sacred books (Mao's works), saints (revolutionary martyrs), hymns, and proselytizing missionaries (Party cadres). And last, but by no means least, it has a distinct set of moral principles.

In this regard, a statement from the Vatican in Rome in April, 1973, is interesting. It asserts that Maoist doctrine contains some directives that "find authentic and complete expression in modern social Christian teaching." The statement goes on to say that "Christian reflections" are present in the thoughts of Mao, and that present-day China, like Christianity, "is devoted to a mystique of disinterested work for others, to inspiration by justice, to exaltation of simple and frugal life, to rehabilitation of the rural masses, and to a mixing of social classes." *

Obviously there are many important differences between Christianity and Maoism, but the Catholic Church finds in Maoist moral principles the basis for reconciliation between the Vatican and the People's Republic.

As a demonstration of the analogy between Maoism and religion, consider the following poem. It was written in 1969 when the cult of Maoism was at its height in China.

In what ways could this poem be considered religious?

Long Life to You, Chairman Mao

Over the surging waters
Of the great Yangtse,
Ten thousand *li*, and more,
Rises a bright red sun,
Riding over the waves,
Shaking the earth!
The bold and stately mountains
Straighten out;
The rippling waters
Sing a joyful song:
Chairman Mao!
Our most respected and beloved leader
Chairman Mao
Enjoys good health;
Enjoys good health!
Chairman Mao
You give us
Faith and strength illimitable;
With your encouragement
Comes the realization of our great ideals;

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* Reported in the *New York Times*, April 18, 1973.

Seaborne Cultural Work Team, Kwangchow, from *Chinese Literature*, No. 4 (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1969).

We give of our best,
Aim high;
We will follow you forever!
We will advance
Through storm and hurricane!
We bless you, Chairman Mao;
Long, long life to you.

伟大的领袖毛主席万
省革命委员会
伟大的中国共产党万

Long Life to You, Chairman Mao

The cult of Mao was particularly a feature of the early years of the Cultural Revolution, 1966-1976, when the aging leader made his most vigorous attempt to transform the habits and traditional thought patterns of the Chinese people. Mao's works became, for a short while, almost the sole reading material available to the Chinese people. No work on any topic was published without obligatory quotations from The Chairman.

Since the death of Mao in 1976, his role in the Chinese revolution has been reassessed. As the following excerpt from a 1980 article in a communist Party journal indicates, the cult of Mao has been repudiated. Is it still possible to consider communism a religion or at least a substitute for religion? ❧

Opposing Personality Cult

Is it possible for the Party Central Committee to make mistakes? Is it possible for responsible comrades of the Central Committee to make mistakes? Yes, it is in both cases.

In the late 50s, due to lack of normal, democratic life inside the Party, and due to lack of properly conducted criticism and self-criticism, the responsible comrade of the Central Committee (Chairman Mao) deviated from his own correct thinking and made mistakes. For many years . . . the personality cult prevailed, so that a particular person was deified and it was assumed that whatever he said or did was one hundred per cent correct and there couldn't possibly be any doubt about it

There were many other things that smack of feudalism and ignorance, things like: he understands the situation to the last detail, he sees right through everything, and he is our saviour.

The consequences of this were: firstly, democratic centralism which is a Party tradition disappeared completely; secondly, it was utterly impossible to seek truth from facts; thirdly, it was utterly impossible to emancipate the mind; and fourthly, it inevitably led to feudal autocracy under which one person had all the say and patriarchal practices prevailed and this was exploited by some bad elements, who engaged in fascist practices.

So the personality cult, something which is so completely anti-Marxist, must be repudiated in all seriousness and it must never be revived again in future.

Meng Hsiang-ying Stands Up

> With the rise of the peasant movement, the women in many places have now begun to organize rural women's associations; the opportunity has come for them to lift up their heads . . . .
>
> Mao Tse-tung, 1927

Editor's Introduction: We have seen the importance of land reform and thought reform in revolutionary China. We have also seen how the Communists have tried to change the traditional Chinese family, rejecting the old family ethic as the basis of social morality. The Communists insist that the interests of the family should not take precedence over the interests of the society at large.

In addition, they have taken steps to alter relationships and behavior within the family. This is particularly true in regard to the role of women. The changed status of women in China today is one of the most remarkable differences between the new and the old China.

The next selection begins by describing some of the "old rules" that regulated the lives of women and goes on to illustrate how the status of women changed. The story takes place in the 1940's, during the war with Japan. The heroine, Meng Hsiang-ying, lives in a village in a Communist-controlled area. Other areas were controlled by the Japanese and still others by the Chinese Nationalist government of Chiang K'ai-shek.

"Meng Hsiang-ying Stands Up," by Zhao Shuli, translated by W. J. F. Jenner. From *Modern Chinese Stories*, © Oxford University Press, 1970, pp. 121-38; abridged.

How does Meng Hsiang-ying successfully rebel? What similarities do you notice between the movement for land reform, as described in "Stone Wall Village Turns Over" and "The Paupers' Co-op," and the movement for women's liberation?

THIS IS WILD hill-country: As they used to say in the old days, "the mountains are high and the emperor is far away," which could be brought up to date as "The mountains are high and the government is far away"—it is some fifteen miles to the district government office. For this reason the customs here have not changed much since the last years of the Ch'ing dynasty [19th century]. For women the old rule still holds good that as a daughter-in-law you have to put up with beating and abuse, but that once you become a mother-in-law yourself you can beat and curse your daughter-in-law. If you don't, you're failing to put up a good show of being a mother-in-law. The old rule for men in handling their wives is, "A wife you've married is like a horse you've bought—you can ride them or flog them as you like." Any man who does not beat his wife is only proving that he is afraid of her. . . .

One day Meng asked her mother-in-law for some cloth with which to patch her husband's clothes, and the mother-in-law told her to ask the father-in-law for it. According to the old rules she should not have had to ask him for patching cloth, and when Meng argued the point with her mother-in-law, leaving her without a leg to stand on, the mother-in-law started abusing her again. The mother-in-law, realizing that she could not possibly win against Meng, who was in the right and prepared to argue, hurried to the fields to call her son.

"Mei-ni" (this was Meng's husband's name), "come back at once. I can't do anything with that young madam of yours. She wants to eat me alive."

As she could not control the young madam, Mei-ni had to come back and flaunt his authority as young master. The moment he arrived he grabbed a stick and went for Meng—according to the old rules there was no need for him to bother to ask why. But Mei-ni did not have much authority himself, being a lad of only sixteen and a year younger than his wife, and Meng snatched the stick back from him.

This caused real trouble. By the old rules, when a man beat his wife she was expected to take a few blows and then run away, after which somebody else would take the stick from him and that would be the end of the matter. But Meng had not simply refused to be beaten and to run away, she had actually disarmed him, making him feel thoroughly humiliated. In his rage he picked up a sickle and hacked a bloody wound on Meng's forehead, from which the blood kept gushing out even after they had been pulled apart.

The people who broke up the fight seemed to think that Mei-ni had done wrong. Nearly everyone said that if he had to hit her, he should have done so anywhere but on the head. They were only saying that he had hit her in the wrong place. Nobody asked why he had hit her. By the old rules there was no need to ask why a man had hit his wife.

After the fight everyone dispersed as though it were no business of theirs. The only person not to take so casual an attitude was Meng herself. If her head had been cut open when she was completely in the right, and nobody was going to say a fair word for her, then it seemed that there was nothing to stop her husband from hitting her whenever he wanted to. Was this to go on forever? The more she thought about it the more hopeless it seemed. Finally she decided on suicide and swallowed some opium.

As she did not swallow enough she did not die but started retching violently. When her relations discovered this they poured some dirty water, in which combs had been cleaned, down her throat, which made her bring it all up.

"If you like swallowing opium that's fine," her mother-in-law said. "I've got a whole jar of it. I hope you can swallow the lot." Meng would have been glad to, but her mother-in-law did not produce it. . . .

In 1942 a [Communist Party] worker came [to the village]. When he asked them to choose a leader for the Women's

National Salvation Association the villagers suggested Meng. "She can talk," they said, "and that means she can keep a firm grip on what is right." But nobody had the courage to discuss the proposal with her mother-in-law. "I'll go myself," said the worker, but he met with some opposition. "She won't do," said Meng's mother-in-law. "She's a failed suicide, she couldn't cope. . . ."

The worker, a young man, lost his patience when all his arguments were met with "she couldn't cope" by Meng's mother-in-law. "If she can't," he shouted, "then you'll have to." To his surprise this did the trick. Meng's mother-in-law had always thought that being a village cadre was dangerous, because sooner or later you were bound to get shot by [Chiang K'ai-shek's] 40th Army. The reason why she did not want Meng to be one was not so much out of love for her as that she was afraid of being in trouble herself as a cadre's relation. This was why, after all her refusals, the worker's suggestion that she should do it herself threw her into a panic. She would get into less trouble by having her daughter-in-law as a cadre than by being one herself. So she became much more amenable: "It's none of my business, none at all. If she can cope, let her."

The worker had won. From then on Meng headed the Women's Association.

As a village cadre she had to go to meetings. Meng would say to her mother-in-law, "Mother, I'm going to a meeting," and off she would go. Mother-in-law was astonished at the idea of a young woman going to a meeting, but she could not stop Meng for fear that the worker would make her take the job on herself. . . .

Meng's mother-in-law had mixed feelings about women taking part in meetings. She would have liked to go along and have a look but decided she had better not; if she did, [Chiang K'ai-shek's] 40th Army would say when they came that she had gone to meetings organized by the "[Communist] 8th Route faction." The next day her curiosity made her go along to find out what a lot of young women together talked about at a meeting. Her investigations shocked her. The women wanted emancipation; they were against being beaten and sworn at by their mothers-in-law and husbands; they were for ending footbinding; they wanted to gather firewood, fetch water, and till the fields; they wanted to do the same work and eat the same food as the men; they wanted to go to winter school.

In her view, this was rebellion. If mothers-in-law and husbands could not beat young wives, who would? Surely someone had to beat them. Meng had feet that she would not allow her mother-in-law to bind small enough, no matter how she was beaten and cursed; surely she did not have the nerve to demand that they be allowed to grow bigger still. Would women who gathered firewood and fetched water still be women? Meng was uncontrollable enough while illiterate, but if she learned to read and write she'd be even more high and mighty. What was the world coming to?

Meng was not particularly bothered by her mother-in-law's worries. With the worker's help her job ran smoothly. She went to a lot of meetings and frequently attended winter school. When a young wife was beaten by her mother-in-law or bullied by her husband, she told Meng, who told the [Communist Party] worker. Then there would be meetings, criticism, and struggle. . . .

No matter what everyone else thought, Meng's mother-in-law was developing a stronger and stronger dislike for her. . . . In her view, a daughter-in-law should be like this: her hair should be combed as straight as a broom handle and her feet should be as small as lotus-leaf cakes; she should make tea, cook, husk millet, mill flour, offer soup and hot water, sweep the floor, and wipe the table clean. From the moment when she started the day by emptying the chamberpots till she set the bedding out at night, she should be at her mother-in-law's beck and call, without wandering off for a single moment. She should hide whenever she saw a stranger, so that outsiders would never know you had a daughter-in-law unless you told them yourself.

This was how she felt daughters-in-law should be, even though she had not always lived up to it in her own youth. She felt that Meng was getting further and further from being a model daughter-in-law. . . . Instead of discussing things with her mother-in-law and keeping some of them from the [Communist] worker, she told him everything. As the mother-in-law made this summary, she thought gloomily, "What am I to do? I can't beat her, I can't swear at her, I can't control her, and I can't sell her. She won't regard herself as a member of the family much longer. Anyone would think the worker her own father." After many sleepless nights she finally thought of a solution: to divide the household.

She asked Niu to be the witness to the division. It was a fair one—if it had not been, Meng would probably not have agreed to it. Meng and her husband took two-thirds of an acre of level land and the same amount of sloping land, but they did not get any grain. "It's all been eaten," her mother-in-law said, "because we harvested so little." After the division the

(From *Jen-min hua-pao*, 1971, Nos. 7–8.)

husband went back to his mother's house to eat and sleep, which left Meng free to go her own way by herself.

After the division, in which all the food she got was less than three pounds of turnips, Meng had nothing to eat but the wild plants. As she had no grain at the New Year, she borrowed nearly three pounds of millet, seven of wheat, and one of salt.

As the district government office is some fifteen miles away, they could not oversee work there, and besides, local cadres were very hard to find. The district Women's Association found it most unreasonable that someone as good as Meng was, both at working herself and at organizing others to beat famine, should be driven from home and left to go hungry. Besides, it hindered work throughout the district. They asked higher authority for permission to issue her with some grain to help her out, and kept her there to organize some of the Women's Association work at the district level.

Meng has been a most successful district cadre this year. . . . In the spring she organized the women to hoe ninety-three acres of wheat and dig two acres of level land as well as seven and a half of hillside. In the struggle against locusts that summer, they cut over ten tons of grass for burning to smoke them out. There is no need for me to go into her other achievements —harvesting wheat, loosening the soil, raking with branches, stripping the twigs of the paper-mulberry tree, and gathering wild plants to eat—because it has all been reported in the press.

Lessons for Women

Editor's Introduction: The story of Meng Hsiang-ying frequently refers to the "old rules." Let us go to an early source of those rules, the famous "Lessons for Women," by Pan Chao, who is sometimes called the most famous woman scholar in China. She wrote the "Lessons" for her daughters in the first century A.D. They were based on customs and values handed down through the centuries, and for nearly two thousand years they continued to be the standard of proper conduct for every young lady. As you read them, try to imagine what a similar essay called "Rules for Men" might prescribe.

HUMILITY

On the third day after the birth of a girl, the ancients observed three customs: (1) to place the baby below the bed; (2) to give her a potsherd with which to play; and (3) to announce her birth to her ancestors by an offering. Now, to lay the baby below the bed plainly indicated that she is lowly and weak and should regard it as her primary duty to humble herself before others. To give her potsherds with which to play signified that she should practice labor and consider it her primary duty to be industrious. To announce her birth before her ancestors

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Pan Chao, "Lessons for Women," in Nancy Lee Swann, *Pan Chao, Foremost Woman Scholar of China* (New York: Russell and Russell, 1968), pp. 82–90; abridged. Copyright © 1932 by Princeton University Library. Reprinted by permission.

Chinese women, photographed in the nineteenth century. (From G. W. Browne and N. H. Dole, *The New American and the Far East,* Boston, 1907.)

clearly meant that she ought to esteem as her primary duty the continuation of the observance of worship in the home.

These three ancient customs epitomize a woman's ordinary way of life and the teachings of the traditional ceremonial rites and regulations. Let a woman modestly yield to others; let her respect others; let her put others first, herself last. Should she do something good, let her not mention it; should she do something bad, let her not deny it. Let her bear disgrace; let her even endure when others speak or do evil to her. Always let her seem to tremble and to fear. Then she may be said to humble herself before others.

Let a woman retire late to bed, but rise early to duties; let her not dread tasks by day or by night. Let her not refuse to perform domestic duties whether easy or difficult. That which must be done, let her finish completely, tidily, and systematically. Then she may be said to be industrious.

Let a woman be correct in manner and upright in character in order to serve her husband. Let her live in purity and quietness [of spirit] and attend to her own affairs. Let her love not gossip and silly laughter. Let her cleanse and purify and arrange in order the wine and the food for the offerings to the ancestors. Then she may be said to continue ancestral worship.

No woman who observes these three [fundamentals of life] has ever had a bad reputation or has fallen into disgrace. If a woman fail to observe them, how can her name be honored; how can she but bring disgrace upon herself?

HUSBAND AND WIFE

If a husband does not control his wife, then the rules of conduct manifesting his authority are abandoned and broken. If a wife does not serve her husband, then the proper relationship [between men and women] and the natural order of things are neglected and destroyed.

RESPECT AND CAUTION

If husband and wife have the habit of staying together, never leaving one another, and following each other around within the limited space of their own rooms, then they will lust after and take liberties with one another. From such action improper language will arise between the two. This kind of discussion may lead to licentiousness. Out of licentiousness will be born a heart of disrespect to the husband. Such a result comes from not knowing that one should stay in one's proper place. . . .

WOMANLY QUALIFICATIONS

A woman [ought to] have four qualifications: (1) womanly virtue; (2) womanly words; (3) womanly bearing; and (4) womanly work. . . .

To guard carefully her chastity; to control her behavior; in every motion to exhibit modesty; and to model each act on the best usage—this is womanly virtue.

To choose her words with care; to avoid vulgar language; to speak at appropriate times; and not to weary others [with much conversation] may be called the characteristics of womanly words.

To wash and scrub filth away; to keep clothes and ornaments fresh and clean; to wash the head and bathe the body regularly, and to keep the person free from disgraceful filth may be called the characteristics of womanly bearing.

With wholehearted devotion to sew and to weave; to love not gossip and silly laughter; in cleanliness and order [to prepare] the wine and food for serving guests may be called the characteristics of womanly work.

These four qualifications characterize the greatest virtue of a woman. No woman can afford to be without them. In fact they are very easy to possess if a woman only treasure them in her heart. The ancients had a saying: "Is love far off? If I desire love, then love is at hand!" So can it be said of these qualifications.

WHOLEHEARTED DEVOTION

Now in the "Rites" is written the principle that a husband may marry again, but there is no Canon that authorizes a woman to be married the second time. Therefore it is said of husbands as of Heaven, that as certainly as people cannot run away from Heaven, so surely a wife cannot leave [a husband's home]. . . .

The ancient book "A Pattern for Women" says: "To obtain the love of one man is the crown of a woman's life; to lose the love of one man is to miss the aim in woman's life."

IMPLICIT OBEDIENCE

Whenever the mother-in-law says, "Do not do that," and if what she says is right, unquestionably the daughter-in-law obeys. Whenever the mother-in-law says, "Do that," even if what she says is wrong, still the daughter-in-law submits unfailingly to the command.

Let a woman not act contrary to the wishes and the opinions of parents-in-law about right and wrong; let her not dispute with them what is straight and what is crooked. . . .

The Status of Women
Old Customs, New Laws

Editor's Introduction: The "Lessons for Women" clearly indicate the inferior status of women in traditional China, but they do not tell the whole story. The following selection describes some of the other disadvantages of being born female. It also indicates some of the steps that have been taken to bring about change, and why the Communists have had great support from women in promoting revolution.

THE CLEAREST INDICATION of female subservience in traditional China was the bizarre custom of footbinding. It began in about the tenth century A.D. and continued for a thousand years, until the middle of the present century. There are many theories about the original reasons for footbinding, but no one seems to know how it began. Whatever the origin, small feet became an obsession with Chinese men.

Well-bound feet were about three inches long. They made women walk with an unusual swaying motion that Chinese men found very attractive. The stigma attached to large feet was such that every woman, no matter what her social level (except in a very few areas of China), had her feet bound. Grandmother Ning, a working woman who had been a beggar

By Peter J. Seybolt.

for part of her life, described the binding of her feet in an interview:

> They did not begin to bind my feet until I was seven because I loved so much to run and play. Then I became very ill and they had to take the bindings off my feet again. . . .
>
> When I was nine they started to bind my feet again and they had to draw the bindings tighter than usual. My feet hurt so much that for two years I had to crawl on my hands and knees. Sometimes at night they hurt so much I could not sleep. I stuck my feet under my mother and she lay on them so they hurt less and I could sleep. But by the time I was eleven my feet did not hurt and by the time I was thirteen they were finished. The toes were turned under so that I could see them on the inner and under side of the foot. They had come up around. Two fingers could be inserted in the cleft between the front of the foot and the heel. My feet were very small indeed.
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> A girl's beauty and desirability were counted more by the size of her feet than by the beauty of her face. Matchmakers were not asked "Is she beautiful?" but "How small are her feet?" A plain face is given by heaven but poorly bound feet are a sign of laziness.
>
> My feet were very small indeed. Not like they are now. When I worked so hard and was on my feet all day I slept with the bandages off because my feet ached, and so they spread.*

Bones that resisted the pressure of the bandages were broken by a blow from a wooden mallet. It is not surprising that the feet of many girls and women became diseased, and death was not an uncommon result.

Footbinding had been on the decline for a number of years before the Communists came to power. Westerners had been very critical of the practice since the 1800's, and this seems to have influenced the Chinese. Chiang K'ai-shek's government outlawed footbinding but had been unwilling or

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* *A Daughter of Han, the Autobiography of a Chinese Working Woman,* as told to Ida Pruitt by Ning Lao T'ai-t'ai (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1967), p. 22. Originally published by Yale University Press and used by permission.

Right: A woman in the nineteenth century displaying bound feet unwrapped.
Above: A comparison of a bound foot and a normal foot.

unable to stop it completely. It ended very quickly after 1949.

The Communists also forbade and put an end to female infanticide—the practice of exposing newborn baby girls to the elements and letting them die, resorted to by impoverished families, usually during a famine, when they could not feed all of the family members. Boys were almost never killed, because only males could perform the all-important rites of ancestor worship and because they, in their privileged status, could better provide security for their parents in old age.

Female slavery was another institution maintained for centuries before the Communists came to power. Poor families often sold their daughters to the rich. The family that owned a slave was obligated to contract a marriage for her when she came of age and to free her at that time. Not infrequently, slave girls became concubines (second, third, or fourth wives) to wealthy men. The children they bore always belonged legally to the first wife and the father.

Some of the slave girls were sold into prostitution. In traditional China, every town of any size had its licensed "tea house" prostitutes. Shanghai, a city built by Westerners seeking fortune and adventure in China, had many thousands of prostitutes. The Communists closed down the "fiery pits" that exploited these girls and established rehabilitation centers, where they were taught a trade and cured of venereal disease, which was rampant among them.

The former prostitutes were treated as unfortunate victims of the old society and foreign imperialism, not as sinful degenerates or enemies of society. According to the Chinese press and reports of foreign travelers, there are no prostitutes in China today. It is probably the only country in the world where that is true.

Although female infanticide, slavery, and prostitution were very common in traditional China, most girls and women escaped those circumstances. But all were subject to the tyranny of the mother-in-law and the legal domination of the husband. Because the Communists promised women freedom and complete equality, it is not surprising that women played a very important role in the revolution.

When the Communists came to power in 1949, one of the first laws the new government passed was the "Marriage Law," which made women legally the equals of men. The provisions of this law leave no room for doubt that past customs and attitudes are no longer acceptable.

The Marriage Law

[Promulgated by the Central People's Government on May 1, 1950.]

CHAPTER 1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Article 1. The arbitrary and compulsory feudal marriage system, which is based on the superiority of man over woman and which ignores the children's interests, shall be abolished.

The new democratic marriage system, which is based on free choice of partners, on monogamy, on equal rights for both sexes, and on protection of the lawful interests of women and children, shall be put into effect.

Article 2. Bigamy, concubinage, child betrothal, interference with the remarriage of widows, and the exaction of money or gifts in connection with marriage shall be prohibited. . . .

CHAPTER III. RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF HUSBAND AND WIFE

Article 7. Husband and wife are companions living together and shall enjoy equal status in the home.

Article 8. Husband and wife are in duty bound to love, respect, assist, and look after each other, to live in harmony, to engage in production, to care for the children, and to strive jointly for the welfare of the family and for the building up of a new society.

Article 9. Both husband and wife shall have the right to free choice of occupation and free participation in work or in social activities.

Article 10. Both husband and wife shall have equal right in the possession and management of family property.

Article 11. Both husband and wife shall have the right to use his or her own family name.

Article 12. Both husband and wife shall have the right to inherit each other's property.

Women in China today are equal to men according to the law, but true equality has not yet been realized. Women are supposed to receive equal pay for equal work, but often they do not. More boys than girls attend school at the higher levels, and many more men than women occupy positions of responsibility in government, in production, in schools, and so on.

But no women in the world have come so far in so short a time as have the women of China. And in no other country is women's liberation promoted so vigorously today.

The Home Life of a Saleswoman

Editor's Introduction: The next selection appeared in the Chinese journal *China Reconstructs.* It gives a picture of what life is like for at least one woman in China today. As you read it, pay attention to what the writer thinks is important. Note particularly her relationship with her husband and the values she reveals when discussing the upbringing of her children. How does her life compare with that of salespeople you know? How does her family life compare to family life in the United States?

BOTH MY HUSBAND and I work in the Peking Department Store, the city's largest. My husband, Wang Chun-chuan, is on the management staff. I work behind the counter. We have three daughters. The older two, aged ten and eight, are in primary school. The youngest, 4, goes to the nursery run by the store. Although both of us work and we have children, we have all along been able to work with our minds free from domestic worries and have never needed to let housework and having children affect our progress.

FINDING A JOB

Since liberation, not only do the women of new China enjoy political equality, but an increasing number of them have left the confines of the home to take on jobs in all fields. One day in 1956, when I was sixteen, I came into town from the out-

Tsui Hsiu-mei, "A Saleswoman's Home Life," *China Reconstructs,* January, 1973, pp. 32–34.

skirts and heard that the department stores were advertising for shop assistants. I plucked up courage and applied, not really expecting to be taken on, but I was accepted. When I went home and told the family, my father was much moved. "You're living in good times, daughter," he said. "In my day, even men had a hard time getting a job of any kind, to say nothing of girls like you."

When I reported for work I was put on the "trainee shift." It was explained to me that this was for rather young beginners like myself. We were to work seven hours instead of the regular [eight-hour] shift while still getting the full pay. That would enable us to get more rest and to study more.

MARRIAGE

I found my work very interesting and put all my energy into becoming a good saleswoman. I moved into the living quarters for single women staff-members and after work would get together with my girl friends to chat, sing or read.

I love basketball and spent a lot of time on the court in the yard. I took part in almost every match, either against another department in the store or as a member of our store's team in city tournaments. That was how I met Wang Chunchuan, also a basketball fan. We found we had a lot in common besides basketball. We often did our political reading together, and we found we were very close together in our thinking. Temperamentally we suited each other too. An affection grew up between us, and in 1962 we were married.

Several months after our marriage I became pregnant. As a worker in a state enterprise I am covered by National Labor Insurance. Once a month, later once every two weeks, I could take time out from work for a checkup. From my seventh month of pregnancy, I worked seven instead of eight hours, with no cut in pay. My baby was born in the hospital with which our company has a contract, with all expenses for delivery and hospitalization, except for meals, paid by the Labor Insurance Fund. I had fifty-six days of maternity leave with pay.

MOTHERHOOD

Life became more complicated after I became a mother, but the main problem of child care was solved by the crèche of the nursery run by our store, which is not very far from where we live. There are four classes in the nursery: At fifty-six days, infants can enter the nursing class. When a child is one and a half years old, he goes on to the lower class; at three, he goes on to the middle class; and at five, he goes on to the higher class. When the child is seven years old, he leaves to go on to primary school.

Either Chun-chuan or I took the baby to the nursery on our way to the store and picked her up after work every day. According to the regulations, I was permitted to take half an hour off twice a day, in the morning and afternoon, to run over to the crèche to nurse the baby. This went on until she was weaned. When our daughter was one and a half years old, we put her in the full-time nursery—that is, she lived there all week and came home to us for Saturday night and Sunday. We could go and visit her any time we wanted. In this way I needed to worry even less about the child.

Chun-chuan earns sixty-eight *yuan* [1 *yuan* equals about $.50 U.S. today] a month and I get fifty-five. When our daughter was in the day crèche, was paid six *yuan* a month for her care and an additional sum for food, which included milk and fruit. When she started going full time, we paid fifteen *yuan* a month, which covered everything, including food. The rather low fee is possible because the company subsidizes the nursery out of its workers' welfare fund.

When my first child entered the nursery, I worried about this and that. But after I learned all about the nursery, I felt that my worries were unnecessary. The nurses are patient and affectionate. The children get regular health checkups and all the necessary preventive inoculations. Clothes and bedding are washed and changed regularly. During the hot summer days, the children are given baths every day. Particularly after the age of three, attention is paid to various aspects of character education, such as honesty, love of labor, and an attitude of caring for public property.

All three of my daughters grew up in the nursery. Beginning collective life at a very early stage, they have developed good habits and are all in good health. While they were in the nursery, I did not have to be bothered when they had light

Tsui Hsui-mei and her family. (From *China Reconstructs*, January, 1973, p. 33.)

illnesses, as these were attended to by the nursery health-worker. When the trouble was more serious, they called me at the store and I would be given time off to take the child to the clinic. Sometimes if we happened to be very busy, the nursery staff would do this for me. Last autumn I was sent to the far outskirts of the city to interview job applicants. A few days after I left, my youngest daughter suddenly ran a high fever. A member of the nursery staff immediately took her to the clinic and called my husband to say that she had done so.

HOUSEHOLD TASKS ARE SHARED

Since Chun-chuan and I both work, we don't want to spend much time cooking. Usually we have breakfast and supper at home and eat our lunch in the staff dining room. Quite often we buy cooked rice or steamed bread at the dining room and come home and cook one or two vegetable or meat dishes that we like. This saves much time and enables us to eat in a home atmosphere more often. When we are busy, we sometimes eat all three meals in the dining room, and our two older daughters come to join us.

On Sunday, when the whole family gets together, we usually have some special dishes. Chun-chuan and the children go to the market and select some fish, a family favorite, or we all pitch in and make *jiaozi* (filled dumplings), a treat for the children. Since Chun-chuan is a good cook he frequently prepares the food while I do the laundry or mending. After lunch, the children usually clamor to go to the park or to see a film. We generally follow their wishes and take them out.

Chun-chuan and I share the daily housework. The two older girls are beginning to take quite a bit of it off our hands. They have one characteristic in common: they are diligent and love labor. They fight to go on little errands, such as running to the store for things like soy sauce or vinegar. There were quite a few funny incidents while the older child was learning to cook rice. Once she put the rice on the stove and then went out to play. . . . By the time she thought of the rice, the whole potful was scorched. When I saw it I didn't know whether to laugh or cry.

"Who's going to eat this rice?" I said weakly.

"Well, Mama, you're always telling us not to waste grain . . ."

In the end we all ate it.

We make it a point not to spoil the children and do our best to cooperate with the school in character education and cultivating in them a thirst for knowledge. The girls all try to do as Chairman Mao teaches, "Study well and make progress every day."

On National Day last year, my cousin took my second daughter to the park. The girl saw a fountain pen lying on the grass. She picked it up and called out, "Whose fountain pen is this?" When no one answered, she dragged my cousin out of the park with her, found a policeman and handed the pen to him to be placed at the lost-and-found center.

The oldest girl is very capable at housework. She does her own laundry and sometimes that of her sisters. She helps them wash their hair. On Saturday afternoon, she often goes and fetches her youngest sister from the nursery, so that my husband or I do not have to do it.

Of an evening we like to look through the day's *People's Daily* to keep up with important international and domestic affairs. Sometimes we turn on the radio and listen to music or operas. I spend some of the time studying Marxist-Leninist classics and Chairman Mao's writings. All my colleagues are making a serious study of these and I have to work extra hard to keep up, because I did not have as many years of schooling as most of them. Chun-chuan helps me a good deal. When we were studying the *Communist Manifesto,* he found some background material for me to read and discussed the more difficult points with me. He often recommended newspaper articles in which people who had studied the *Manifesto* told what they had got out of it.

Our household arrangements enable us to give our full attention to our work. If someone at the store happens to be out sick and there is no substitute available, I can easily put in extra hours, and it always gives me a good feeling to be able to contribute a little more to the building of socialism, however small my part.

Romance in the New China

Editor's Introduction: It's not all work for young people in the countryside or elsewhere in China, though one might get that impression from reading Chinese publications. Youth in China are just as romantic and just as attracted to members of the opposite sex as are young people all over the world. But they don't talk about it as much as we do. Nor are they bombarded by advertising that plays on sexual interest to sell products.

The Peking saleswoman we read about, Tsui Hsiu-mei, says she met her husband at a basketball game. They did political reading together (studying the works of Chairman Mao) and were very close in their thinking. Such is the standard testimony of young couples in China when asked about their marriages.

Foreigners traveling in China who inquire about courtship customs and relations between the sexes are often met with a shy, embarrassed response. A Japanese journalist in Shanghai asked a twenty-five-year-old woman about her concept of an ideal husband. He reports that she blushed violently and answered in a trembling voice, "A man who devotes his heart and soul to the task of serving the people of the whole world as is described in Chairman Mao's *In Memory of Norman Bethune*." That reply might have been contrived for a nosy foreigner. The girl might have given a very different response to a close friend. On the other hand, she might have been perfectly sincere. Her answer would sound ridiculous elsewhere in the world, but in China, no one would find it odd.

The Chinese have one of the lowest divorce rates in the world.

Wang Wen-shih, "Summer Nights," *Women of China,* Nos. 4–5, 1960, pp. 45–48; abridged.

Why? Is it because common attitudes toward politics and work bind husbands and wives together? Perhaps. At any rate, politics seems to be a prominent feature of family life in China.

One looks almost in vain for love poetry or stories about romance in Chinese publications. When they appear, sexual attraction is only implicit or suggested. The explicit or obvious theme is a lesson in politics or the proper attitude toward labor. The story you are about to read, which appeared in 1960 in the journal *Women of China*, illustrates this point. How does it differ from other romantic literature you have read? ❧

EVERY DAY AT dusk, as the village bell rang for the last time and stars began to appear in the summer sky, a young man would silently emerge through the twilight. Slung over his shoulder was a purple haversack.

He had an air of serious preoccupation not usually found in one so young. Each time he arrived, he would greet the two girl tractor-drivers with his confident attractive smile and put down his haversack. Then he would walk up to the tractor and examine its mechanism from every angle with his flashlight, asking no end of questions, like a master technician. Even when the tractor was in operation he would walk along with it, watching every movement of the driver. He would give the driver a helping hand whenever she needed one, carrying an oil can or getting boiled water. . . . Sometimes he would make some entries in his notebook, after which he would lie down for a rest not far from where the girls had erected their tent. When the village bell sounded at dawn, he would rise, take up his haversack, and smile farewell at the girls. But the same day at dusk, he would punctually appear again. . . .

Ma Yun-yun, a sweet and saucy-faced lass, born and raised on a farm, had learned to drive a tractor after only three days' instruction and had become an advanced driver. Her manner was definitely cool to the comings and goings of this young man. In the past few days, she had complained several times to her team-mate, Hsu Yu-chin, who was also her teacher and chief of their tractor team.

"I really don't understand. Why are you so friendly to him? Who is he, anyway?"

"I don't know," Yu-chin replied apologetically. She was a sweet-faced girl with fair skin and a full figure. "Anyway, he is a young man of our commune."

"Fine! You don't even know him. A girl who's going to be married any day—why don't you send him away?"

The two girls, . . . having finished their breakfast, went to the river. Their precious tractor stood on the flats below. Suddenly, they were startled to hear the roar of the tractor engine. With Yun-yun in the lead, the girls raced down the path. On the dyke beside the lotus pond, Yun-yun abruptly halted.

"Look, Yu-chin! There he is again! It's all because you were too easy on him!". . .

Yun-yun charged to the northern end of the field directly in the path of the approaching tractor. The machine halted. Yun-yun saw for the first time in daylight the face of the "criminal" in the driver's seat. She was very surprised. The glowing sunrise clouds lit up a handsome, sunburned visage. A pair of honest, determined black eyes glanced back at the turned soil, then gazed at Yun-yun, as if expecting her approbation.

"Come down!" the girl commanded. But her tone wasn't as brusque as she had intended it to be.

With an apologetic smile, the young fellow leaped down from the seat.

"It isn't enough that you hang around all night. You have to come in the daytime too!"

"This is my day off."

"If it is, why don't you go someplace and rest? Why come here?"

The young man's face fell.

"What you've been doing is illegal, don't you know?" She spoke with a serious air, conscious of the fact that she was from the first batch of tractor-drivers, but still a naughty girl for all that.

With startled eyes, the young fellow looked at Yun-yun, then at the tractor, then at the approaching Yu-chin.

"I don't think I've hurt it," he mumbled.

The sight of this large, brawny youth, so utterly cowed by a mere slip of a girl a head shorter than he, struck Yu-chin as very funny. She had been intending to criticize him severely, but now she only said in a firm but pleasant voice: "You must never do anything like this again. If we're going to bring mechanization to the countryside, we have to observe some rules and discipline."

After silently considering this for a moment, the young fellow smiled and said frankly: "I was wrong. Check over your machine, then tell me what I should do."

"Of course I'll check it!" she said to him sternly. She made a thorough examination of the tractor, finally climbing into the driver's seat, starting up the engine. Only then did she solemnly wave her hand to Yu-chin to indicate that nothing was wrong with the machine.

Concealing her amusement at Yun-yun's antics, the older girl said to the young man: "Let's have no more of this monkey business. If you want to learn, come around to our station after the summer planting is over."

The young man thanked her, then looked at Yun-yun with a provocative smile that seemed to say: So you thought you could scare me! We'll see about that!

Yun-yun raised her chin. "I'll let you go this time."

With a farewell glance at the tractor, the young fellow picked up his haversack and strode toward the river flats, a smile still lurking at the corners of his mouth. . . .

The broad fields of the bottom of the land rolled away to the east like waves, and the tractor sailed over them. Yun-yun, who had just completed the afternoon shift, decided not to return to Aunt Wang's [where she was staying while she worked in that area.* She decided instead] to sleep in a lean-to set up against the wall of a small temple. The day was over and the sun was setting over the Wei River. One section had been newly ploughed. She appraised it with an expert eye.

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* "Aunt" is a term of respect and affection applied to an older woman; Yun-yun and Aunt Wang are not related.

"Terrific!" she muttered admiringly. "Yu-chin's done over ten acres in one shift!" This girl who so loved work and new accomplishments, couldn't restrain her enthusiasm. The blood in her veins sang, her spirits soared.

"Hey! Hey! Hey!" She cried through the night to Yu-chin on the tractor.

"Hey! Hey! Hey!" The echo rang back across the river flats, much to Yun-yun's delight. She heard her youthful voice from the echo.

She shouted again, wildly, and again came an echoing call. Only in addition to the sound of her own voice, there was another—ardent, vibrant, strong. Startled, she peered through the mist.

"Oh, my! Who in the world have I woken up by shouting."

Someone was coming toward her across the field, closer and clearer. Halting at the lean-to, he addressed Yun-yun cheerfully, like an old friend.

"Is it our fine land that makes you so happy?"

That bulging purple haversack again, that gay confident manner!

"What are you doing here?" Yun-yun asked in surprise. "Coming to practice on our tractor again?"

"You needn't worry, comrade. I've just come back. I hear there's a party here tonight and I want to see if it's ready yet or not."

"A party? Last time when you messed around with our tractor, you were having a day off. Tonight, you've come to a party. You must think we're running some kind of a club!"

The young man grinned. "You often don't believe my words. Well, wait and see."

He shouldered his haversack and walked away to the west.

Not long after, Aunt Wang came, bringing food for the girls. Yu-chin drove up with the tractor and said to Yun-yun: "The Youth League is giving a party tonight. We're both invited."

(From *China Reconstructs*, September, 1973.)

"There really is a party?" said Yun-yun, remembering the young man's words. "Why didn't you tell me before?"

A bright pressure lamp was hanging high on the pole of the lean-to, brilliantly illuminating a section of the dark fields.

The young men of the village, the girls, the young wives, arrived chatting and laughing. They greeted the girl tractor-drivers and peered with great interest at the machine.

At that moment, a man came forward through the crowd. Catching sight of him, Aunt Wang cried happily: "So you're back, Shu-hung!"

Yu-chin looked up in surprise when she heard him addressed as Shu-hung: . . . the young man who had stealthily driven their tractor was Aunt Wang's son, a childhood friend whom Yun-yun had not seen for years. . . .

The party went on happily beneath the starry summer-night sky. There was lively music, voices of songs, happy laughter. As if inspired by this youthful merriment, the waters of the ancient Wei murmured a rhythmic accompaniment. . . .

Shu-hung and Yun-yun, shoulder to shoulder, strolled through the fields, recalling the hardships of their childhood, talking of their interests and their plans.

Yun-yun couldn't understand why she felt so close to this young man. She kept asking herself—when she had scolded him so severely and practically chased him away, had she liked him? . . . He was so determined, so persistent, yet so unselfish, so politically aware, so confident! . . .

Many thoughts ran through her mind as she listened to him. Before they knew it, they had reached the white poplar grove. The poplar leaves rustled and danced in the gusty night breeze.

"What's this about you becoming a team-leader?" Yun-yun asked Shu-hung affectionately.

"That's right. It was decided officially only yesterday. Our brigade is going to have its own tractor team. The commune Party committee wants me to take charge. Mother tells me you like our compound," said Shu-hung. . . .

Yun-yun raised her head and met his gaze. How many questions and answers were exchanged in that brief meeting of eyes as the moonlight filtered through the trees! The usually wild Yun-yun was suddenly mature. The change was so marked that even she was aware of it. Hastily, she turned her eyes away.

In a light, strange voice that was filled with happiness, she said, "The moon has risen. I've got to start my night shift."

They returned through the grove. The moon seemed abruptly to rise higher: the bottom land seemed suddenly to light up and grow broader. Not far beyond the side of the grove, the celebration was going strong. Merrymakers were singing the vigorous chorus of the song about the drivers of tractors. . . .

The Confucian Heritage

Editor's Introduction: If romance in China is affected by politics, so then is everything else, and for 30 years after 1948 the thinking of Mao pervaded Chinese politics and therefore society. But prior to Mao—for a period of 2,000 years—the teaching of Confucius prevailed in China. Indeed, if we could use only one word to describe traditional China, that word would be "Confucian."

Confucianism was a way of life, a philosophy of government, a system of ordering society. Like communism, it pervaded all aspects of human activity. It was not a religion as we usually think of religion. Confucius believed in gods, but he was mainly interested in perfecting life on earth.

What is Confucianism? To answer that question adequately would take years of study. But some understanding of Confucian values can be gained by reading a few fragments of the conversations between Confucius and his disciples, recorded more than 2,500 years ago and compiled in a book called the *Analects*. What values did Confucius emphasize? What similarities and differences do you see between Confucian and Maoist values?

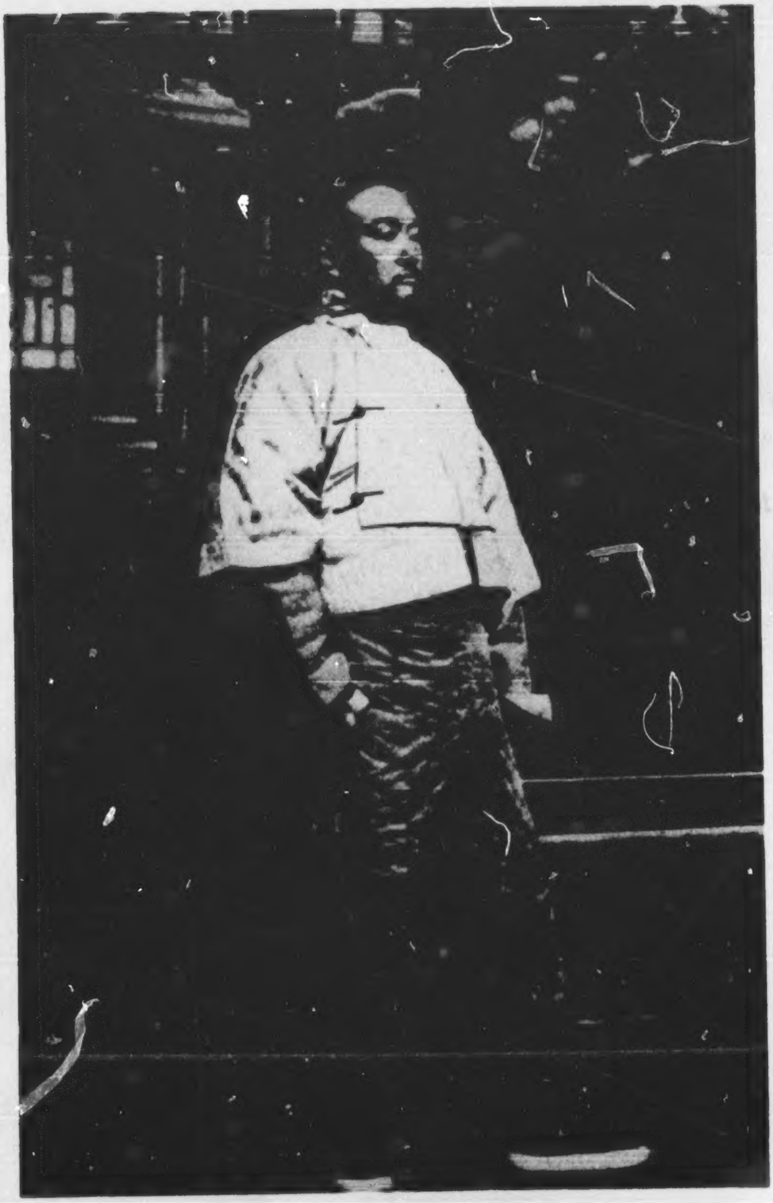
Regard for the past:

Confucius said: "I am a transmitter and not a creator. I believe in and have a passion for the ancients."

Education:

Confucius said: "By nature men are pretty much alike; it is learning and practice that set them apart."

"Selections from *The Analects*," in W. T. de Bary *et al.* (eds.), *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, Vol. I (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960), pp. 23-33; abridged.



A Confucian official.

Confucius said: "Those who are born wise are the highest type of people; those who become wise through learning come next; those who learn by overcoming dullness come after that. Those who are dull but still won't learn are the lowest type of people."

Humanity:

Confucius said: "Behave when away from home as though you were in the presence of an important guest. Deal with the common people as though you were officiating at an important sacrifice. Do not do to others what you would not want others to do to you. Then there will be no dissatisfaction either in the state or at home."

Confucius said: "To be able to practice five virtues everywhere in the world constitutes humanity. [The five are] courtesy, generosity, good faith, diligence, and kindness. He who is courteous is not humiliated; he who is generous wins the multitude; he who is of good faith is trusted by the people; he who is diligent attains his objective; and he who is kind can get service from the people."

Filial piety [respect for parents]:

Confucius said: "Nowadays a filial son is just a man who keeps his parents in food. But even dogs or horses are given food. If there is no feeling of reverence, wherein lies the difference?"

Religion:

. . . about the worship of ghosts and spirits Confucius said: "We don't know yet how to serve men, how can we know about serving the spirits?" "What about death?" was the next question. Confucius said: "We don't know yet about life, how can we know about death?"

. . . about wisdom Confucius said: "Devote yourself to the proper demands of the people, respect the ghosts and spirits but keep them at a distance—this may be called wisdom."

The gentleman:

Confucius said: "The gentleman is always calm and at ease; the inferior man is always worried and full of distress."

Confucius said: "The gentleman understands what is right; the inferior man understands what is profitable."

Confucius said: "The gentleman makes demands on himself; the inferior man makes demands on others."

Government by personal virtue:

Confucius said: "Lead the people by laws and regulate them by penalties, and the people will try to keep out of jail, but will have no sense of shame. Lead the people by virtue and restrain them by the rules of decorum, and the people will have a sense of shame, and moreover will become good."

Confucius said: "The essentials are sufficient food, sufficient troops, and the confidence of the people." Tzu Kung [a disciple] said: "Suppose you were forced to give up one of these three, which would you let go first?" Confucius said: "The troops." Tzu Kung asked again: "If you were forced to give up one of the two remaining, which would you let go?" Confucius said: "Food. For from of old, death has been the lot of all men, but a people without faith cannot survive."

The Scholar Who Passed the Examination

PART I

Editor's Introduction: The Confucian emphasis on humanity and self-perfection no doubt had an influence on China's rulers and helped to perpetuate the Confucian ethos for so many centuries. Those entrusted with government were supposed to be humane and unselfish, to devote themselves to a lifelong study of moral principles, and to set an example by their own conduct. Their main function as government officials was to maintain the peace and well-being of society.

There were no castes in traditional China. The ruling class was not born to a position of authority like the European or Japanese aristocracy. The highest positions in government were open to any man (women were excluded). Any male with the leisure and the money to pay a tutor could study the Confucian books and could take a series of civil service examinations that would qualify him for government service and high honors. Education, then, was the key to success in Confucian China, and, in theory, everyone had an equal chance.

In fact, however, there was little equality of opportunity. Few people of humble background could afford the many years of study required to learn the very difficult Chinese classical written language (it has been greatly simplified today) and virtually memorize the dozen or so basic Confucian books.

Wu Ching-tzu, *The Scholars* (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1964), pp. 67–77; abridged.

Furthermore, once a person had passed the exams and was awarded a degree he was elevated to a position infinitely higher than that of the common people. He was guaranteed wealth, power, and status. Confucian society erected a rigid barrier between "gentlemen" and "small men." The gentlemen were "mental workers" who governed the small men and were supported by them. They disdained any sort of physical labor. The long gowns they wore and their long fingernails, which sometimes reached six inches, were symbols of their nonlaboring status. It is in an effort to destroy this tradition and the attitudes of superiority and disdain for working people it produces that Mao Tse-tung has insisted that all students, intellectuals, and government officials engage in physical labor together with working people.

In Confucian China, it was not just custom but also law that kept class distinctions clear. One's social rank determined the kind of clothes he could wear, the size of his house, and the kind of food he could eat. Criminal laws were not applied equally to the great and the small. In a law suit between people of the two classes, it was assumed that the gentleman, with his extensive moral training, was the innocent party. If he was found guilty, his sentence for most crimes would be lighter than that for a man of lower status found guilty of the same crimes. In short, Confucianism did everything possible to maintain class distinctions, to keep everyone in his place. Only in this way, Confucius taught, could peace and harmony be maintained.

The story that follows, written in the eighteenth century, pokes fun at aspects of the Confucian system by exaggerating them. Like all good satire, it is based on reality. As the story opens, a number of students are going into an examination hall. From there they will go into small individual rooms, or cells, to write.

What, specifically, is the story criticizing? What does it tell you about the Confucian system? ❧

THE THIRD EXAMINATION was for candidates from Nan-hai and Pan-yu Counties. Commissioner Chou sat in the hall and watched the candidates crowding in. There were young and old, handsome and homely, smart and shabby men among them. The last candidate to enter was thin and sallow, had a grizzled beard and was wearing an old felt hat. Kwangtung has a warm climate; still, this was the twelfth month, and yet this candidate had on a linen gown only, so he was shivering with cold as he took his paper and went to his cell. Chou Chin made a mental note of this before sealing up their doors. During the first interval, from his seat at the head of the hall, he watched this candidate in the linen gown come up to hand in his paper. The man's clothes were so threadbare that a few more holes had appeared since he went into the cell. Commissioner Chou looked at his own garments—his magnificent crimson robe and gilt belt—then he referred to the register of names, and asked, "You are Fan Chin, aren't you?"

Kneeling, Fan Chin answered, "Yes, Your Excellency."

"How old are you this year?"

"I gave my age as thirty. Actually, I am fifty-four."

"How many times have you taken the examination?"

"I first went in for it when I was twenty, and I have taken it over twenty times since then."

"How is it you have never passed?"

"My essays are too poor," replied Fan Chin, "so none of the honorable examiners will pass me."

"That may not be the only reason," said Commissioner Chou. "Leave your paper here, and I will read it through carefully."

Fan Chin kowtowed and left.

It was still early, and no other candidates were coming to hand in their papers, so Commissioner Chou picked up Fan Chin's essay and read it through. But he was disappointed. "Whatever is the fellow driving at in this essay?" he wondered. "I see now why he never passed." He put it aside. However, when no other candidates appeared, he thought, "I might as well have another look at Fan Chin's paper. If he shows the least talent, I'll pass him to reward his perseverance." He read it through again, and this time felt there was something in it. . . .

Then he read Fan Chin's paper again. This time he gave a gasp of amazement. "Even I failed to understand this paper the first two times I read it!" he exclaimed. "But, after reading it for the third time, I realize it is the most wonderful essay in the world—every word a pearl. This shows how often bad examiners must have suppressed real genius." Hastily taking up his brush, he carefully drew three circles on Fan Chin's paper, marking it as first. . . .

Fan Chin's mother and wife were delighted by his success. They were preparing a meal when his father-in-law arrived, bringing pork sausages and a bottle of wine. Fan Chin greeted him, and they sat down together.

"Since I had the bad luck to marry my daughter to a scarecrow like you," said Butcher Hu, "Heaven knows how much you have cost me. Now I must have done some good deed to make you pass the examination. I've brought this wine to celebrate."

Fan Chin assented meekly, and called his wife to cook the sausages and warm the wine. He and his father-in-law sat in the thatched shed, while his mother and wife prepared food in the kitchen.

"Now that you have become a gentleman," went on Butcher Hu, "you must do things in proper style. Of course, men in my profession are decent, high-class people; and I am your elder too—you mustn't put on any airs before me. But these peasants round here, dung-carriers and the like, are low people. If you greet them and treat them as equals, that will be a breach of etiquette and will make me lose face too. You're such an easy-going, good-for-nothing fellow, I'm telling you this for your own good, so that you won't make a laughingstock of yourself.". . .

Since it was the year for the provincial examination . . . Fan Chin's fellow-candidates asked him to go with them to the provincial capital for the examination, but he had no money for the journey. He went to ask his father-in-law to help.

Butcher Hu spat in his face, and poured out a torrent of abuse. "Don't be a fool!" he roared. "Just passing one examination has turned your head completely—you're like a toad trying to swallow a swan! And I hear that you scraped through not because of your essay, but because the examiner pitied you for being so old. Now, like a fool, you want to pass the higher examination and become an official. But do you know who those officials are? They are all stars in heaven! Look at the Chang family in the city. All those officials have pots of money, dignified faces, and big ears. But your mouth sticks out and you've a chin like an ape's. You should piss on the ground and look at your face in the puddle! You look like a monkey, yet you want to become an official. Come off it! Next year I shall find a teaching job for you with one of my friends so that you can make a few taels [ounces] of silver to support that old never-dying mother of yours and your wife—and it's high time you did! Yet you ask me for traveling expenses! . . .

When [Fan Chin] got home again, he thought to himself, "Commissioner Chou said that I showed maturity. And, from ancient times till now, who ever passed the first examination without going in for the second? I shan't rest easy till I've taken it." So he asked his fellow candidates to help him and went to the city (without telling his father-in-law) to take the examination. When the examination was over he returned home only to find that his family had had no food for two days. And Butcher Hu cursed him again.

The day the results came out there was nothing to eat in the house, and Fan Chin's mother told him, "Take that hen of mine to the market and sell it; then buy a few measures of rice to make gruel. I'm faint with hunger."

Fan Chin tucked the hen under his arm and hurried out.

He had only been gone an hour or so when gongs sounded and three horsemen galloped up. They alighted, tethered their horses to the shed, and called out: "Where is the honorable Mr. Fan? We have come to congratulate him on passing the provincial examination."

Not knowing what had happened, Fan Chin's mother had hidden herself in the house for fear. But when she heard that he had passed, she plucked up courage to poke her head out and say, "Please come in and sit down. My son has gone out."

"So this is the old lady," said the heralds. And they pressed forward to demand a tip.

In the midst of this excitement, two more batches of horsemen arrived. Some squeezed inside, while the others packed themselves into the shed, where they had to sit on the ground. Neighbors gathered round, too, to watch; and the flustered old lady asked one of them to go to look for her son. The neighbor ran to the marketplace, but Fan Chin was nowhere to be seen. Only when he reached the east end of the market did he discover the scholar, clutching the hen tightly against his chest and holding a sales sign in one hand. Fan Chin was pacing slowly along, looking right and left for a customer.

"Go home quickly, Mr. Fan!" cried the neighbor. "Congratulations! You have passed the provincial examination. Your house is full of heralds."

Thinking this fellow was making fun of him, Fan Chin pretended not to hear and walked forward with lowered head. Seeing that he paid no attention, the neighbor went up to him and tried to grab the hen.

"Why are you taking my hen?" protested Fan Chin. "You don't want to buy it."

"You have passed," insisted the neighbor. "They want you to go home to send off the heralds.'

"Good neighbor," said Fan Chin, "we have no rice left at home, so I have to sell this hen. It's a matter of life and death. This is no time for jokes! Do go away, so as not to spoil my chance of a sale."

When the neighbor saw that Fan Chin did not believe him, he seized the hen, threw it to the ground, and dragged the scholar back by main force to his home.

The heralds cried, "Good! The newly honored one is back." They pressed forward to congratulate him. But Fan Chin brushed past them into the house to look at the official announcement, already hung up, which read: "This is to announce that the master of your honorable mansion, Fan Chin, has passed the provincial examination in Kwangtung, coming seventh in the list. May better news follow in rapid succession!"

Fan Chin feasted his eyes on this announcement and, after reading it through once to himself, read it once more aloud. Clapping his hands, he laughed and exclaimed, "Ha! Good! I have passed." Then, stepping back, he fell down in a dead faint. His mother hastily poured some boiled water between his lips, whereupon he recovered consciousness and struggled to his feet. Clapping his hands again, he let out a peal of laughter and shouted, "Aha! I've passed! I've passed!" Laughing wildly, he ran outside, giving the heralds and the neighbors the fright of their lives. Not far from the front door, he slipped and fell into a pond. When he clambered out, his hair was disheveled, his hands muddied, and his whole body dripping with slime. But nobody could stop him. Still clapping his hands and laughing, he headed for the market.

They all looked at each other in consternation, and said, "The new honor has sent him off his head!"

His mother wailed, "Aren't we out of luck! Why should passing an examination do this to him? Now he's mad, goodness knows when he'll get better."

"He was all right this morning when he went out," said his wife. "What could have brought on this attack? What *shall* we do?"

The neighbors consoled them. "Don't be upset," they said. "We will send a couple of men to keep an eye on Mr. Fan. And we'll all bring wine and eggs and rice for these heralds. Then we can discuss what's to be done. . . ."

The Scholar Who Passed the Examination

PART II

Editor's Introduction: The first part of "The Scholar Who Passed the Examination" is a Chinese version of the Horatio Alger story, so familiar to Americans—the poor boy who becomes a success through his own ingenuity and effort. But as the story continues, the plot loses its resemblance to the Horatio Alger theme and becomes more typically Chinese.

What are the differences between the traditional Chinese and American ways of rewarding success?

"I HAVE AN IDEA," said one of the heralds, "but I don't know whether it will work or not."

"What idea?" they asked.

"There must be someone the honorable Mr. Fan usually stands in awe of," said the herald. "He's only been thrown off his balance because sudden joy made him choke on his phlegm. If you can get someone he's afraid of to slap him in the face and say, 'It's all a joke. You haven't passed any examination!' —then the fright will make him cough up his phlegm, and he'll come to his senses again."

They all clapped their hands and said, "That's a fine idea.

Mr. Fan is more afraid of Butcher Hu than of anyone else. Let's hurry up and fetch him. . . ."

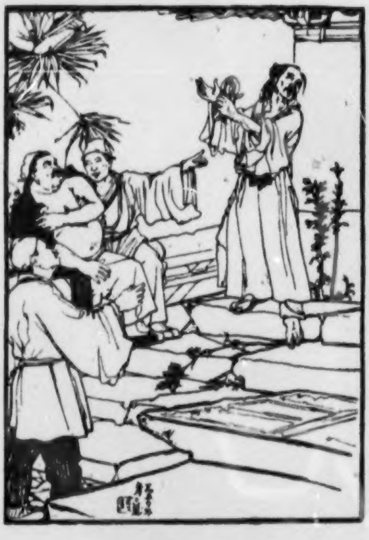
One of the neighbors hurried off in search of the butcher and presently met him on the road, followed by an assistant who was carrying seven or eight catties of meat and four or five strings of cash. Butcher Hu was coming to offer his congratulations. Fan Chin's mother, crying bitterly, told him what had happened.

"How could he be so unlucky!" exclaimed the butcher. They were calling for him outside, so he gave the meat and the money to his daughter, and went out. The heralds put their plan before him, but Butcher Hu demurred.

"He may be my son-in-law," he said, "but he's an official now—one of the stars in heaven. How can you hit one of the stars in heaven? I've heard that whoever hits the stars in heaven will be carried away by the King of Hell, given a hundred strokes with an iron rod, and shut up in the eighteenth hell, never to become a human being again. I daren't do a thing like that.". . .

[Eventually], Butcher Hu had to give in. Two bowls of

Butcher Hu about to restore Fan Chin to his senses.



wine bolstered up his courage, making him lose his scruples and start his usual rampaging. Rolling up his greasy sleeves, he strode off toward the market, followed by small groups of neighbors.

Fan Chin's mother ran out and called after him, "Just frighten him a little! Mind you don't hurt him!"

"Of course," the neighbors reassured her. "That goes without saying."

When they reached the market, they found Fan Chin standing in the doorway of a temple. His hair was tousled, his face streaked with mud, and one of his shoes had come off. But he was still clapping his hands and crowing, "Aha! I've passed! I've passed!"

Butcher Hu bore down on him like an avenging fury, roaring, "You blasted idiot! What have you passed?" and fetched him a blow. The bystanders and neighbors could hardly suppress their laughter. But although Butcher Hu had screwed up his courage to strike once, he was still afraid at heart, and his hand was trembling too much to strike a second time. The one blow, however, had been enough to knock Fan Chin out.

The neighbors pressed round to rub Fan Chin's chest and massage his back, until presently he gave a sigh and came to. His eyes were clear and his madness had passed! They helped him up and borrowed a bench from Apothecary Chen, a hunchback who lived hard by the temple, so that Fan Chin might sit down.

Butcher Hu, who was standing a little way off, felt his hand begin to ache; when he raised his palm, he found to his dismay that he could not bend it. "It's true, then, that you mustn't strike the stars in heaven," he thought. "Now Buddha is punishing me!" The more he thought about it, the worse his hand hurt, and he asked the apothecary to give him some ointment for it.

Meanwhile, Fan Chin was looking round and asking, "How do I come to be sitting here? My mind has been in a whirl, as if in a dream."

The neighbors said, "Congratulations, sir, on having passed the examination! A short time ago, in your happiness, you brought up some phlegm; but just now you spat out several mouthfuls and recovered. Please go home quickly to send away the heralds."

"That's right," said Fan Chin. "And I seem to remember coming seventh in the list." As he was speaking, he fastened up his hair and asked the apothecary for a basin of water to wash his face, while one of the neighbors found his shoe and helped him put it on.

The sight of his father-in-law made Fan Chin afraid that he was in for another cursing. But Butcher Hu stepped forward and said, "Worthy son-in-law, I would never have presumed to slap you just now if not for your mother. She sent me to help you."

"That was what I call a friendly slap," said one of the neighbors. "Wait till Mr. Fan finishes washing his face. I bet he can easily wash off half a basin of lard!"

"Mr. Hu!" said another. "This hand of yours will be too good to kill pigs any more."

"No indeed," replied the butcher. "Why should I go on killing pigs? My worthy son-in-law will be able to support me in style for the rest of my life. . . ."

When they reached Fan Chin's house, Butcher Hu shouted: "The master is back!" The old lady came out to greet them and was overjoyed to find her son no longer mad. The heralds, she told them, had already been sent off with the money that Butcher Hu had brought. Fan Chin bowed to his mother and thanked his father-in-law, making Butcher Hu so embarrassed that he muttered, "That bit of money was nothing."

After thanking the neighbors too, Fan Chin was just going to sit down when a smart-looking retainer hurried in, holding a big red card, and announced, "Mr. Chang has come to pay his respects to the newly successful Mr. Fan."

By this time the sedan-chair was already at the door. Butcher Hu dived into his daughter's room and dared not come out, while the neighbors scattered in all directions. Fan Chin went out to welcome the visitor, who was one of the local gentry, and Mr. Chang alighted from the chair and came in. He was wearing an official's gauze cap, sunflower-colored gown, gilt belt, and black shoes. He was a provincial graduate, and had served as a magistrate in his time. His name was Chang Chin-chai. He and Fan Chin made way for each other ceremoniously, and once inside the house bowed to each other as equals and sat down in the places of guest and host. Mr. Chang began the conversation.

"Sir," he said, "although we live in the same district, I have never been able to call on you."

"I have long respected you," replied Fan Chin, "but have never had the chance to pay you a visit."

"Just now I saw the list of successful candidates. Your patron, Mr. Tang, was a pupil of my grandfather; so I feel very close to you."

"I did not deserve to pass, I am afraid," said Fan Chin. "But I am delighted to be the pupil of one of your family."

After a glance round the room, Mr. Chang remarked, "Sir, you are certainly frugal." He took from his servant a packet of silver, and stated, "I have brought nothing to show my respect except these fifty taels of silver, which I beg you to accept. Your honorable home is not good enough for you, and it will not be very convenient when you have many callers. I have an empty house on the main street by the east gate, which has three courtyards with three rooms in each. Although it is not big, it is quite clean. Allow me to present it to you. When you move there, I can profit by your instruction more easily."

Fan Chin declined many times, but Mr. Chang pressed him. "With all we have in common, we should be like brothers," he said. "But if you refuse, you are treating me like a stranger." Then Fan Chin accepted the silver and expressed his thanks. After some more conversation they bowed and parted. Not until the visitor was in his chair did Butcher Hu dare to emerge.

Fan Chin gave the silver to his wife. When she opened it, and they saw the white ingots with their fine markings, he asked Butcher Hu to come in and gave him two ingots, saying, "Just now I troubled you for five thousand coppers. Please accept these six taels of silver."

Butcher Hu gripped the silver tight, but thrust out his clenched fist, saying, "You keep this. I gave you that money to congratulate you, so how can I take it back?"

"I have some more silver here," said Fan Chin. "When it is spent, I will ask you for more."

Butcher Hu immediately drew back his fist, stuffed the silver into his pocket and said, "All right. Now that you are on good terms with that Mr. Chang, you needn't be afraid of going short. His family has more silver than the emperor, and they are my best customers. Every year, even if they have no particular occasions to celebrate, they still buy four or five thousand catties of meat. Silver is nothing to him."

Then he turned to his daughter and said, "Your rascally brother didn't want me to bring that money this morning. I told him, 'Now my honorable son-in-law is not the man he was. There will be lots of people sending him presents of money. I am only afraid he may refuse my gift.' Wasn't I right? Now I shall take this silver home and curse that dirty scoundrel." After a thousand thanks he made off, his head thrust forward and a broad grin on his face.

True enough, many people came to Fan Chin after that and made him presents of land and shops, while some poor couples came to serve him in return for his protection. In two or three months, he had menservants and maidservants, to say nothing of money and rice. When Mr. Chang came again to urge him, he moved into the new house; and for three days he entertained guests with feasts and operas. On the morning of the fourth day, after Fan Chin's mother had got up and had breakfast, she went to the rooms in the back courtyard. There she found Fan Chin's wife with a silver pin in her hair. Although this was the middle of the tenth month, it was still warm and she was wearing a sky-blue silk tunic and a green silk skirt. She was supervising the maids as they washed bowls, cups, plates, and chopsticks.

"You must be very careful," the old lady warned them. "These things don't belong to us, so don't break them."

"How can you say they don't belong to you, madam?" they asked. "They are all yours."

"No, no, these aren't ours," she protested with a smile.

"Oh yes, they are," the maids cried. "Not only these things, but all of us servants and this house belong to you."

When the old lady heard this, she picked up the fine porcelain and the cups and chopsticks inlaid with silver, and examined them carefully one by one. Then she went into a fit of laughter. "All mine!" she crowed. Screaming with laughter she fell backward, choked, and lost consciousness. . . .

The Leakage System

Editor's Introduction: Confucius said: "The gentleman cherishes virtue; the inferior man cherishes possessions." This was the ideal, and there were gentlemen-officials who sacrificed their own well-being and material comfort for the good of the people. But a far more common situation is revealed by the expression, "Become an official and get rich." The story you have just read indicated that a degree-holder, one of the "stars of heaven," invariably received "gifts" from those who hoped to benefit later from this favor.

In the next selection, Chiang Monlin, former Chancellor of Peking University, writing in 1947, describes how some officials under the traditional system acquired a fortune. What changes had to be made in the traditional Chinese system of government to eliminate this "leakage"?

FROM THE GOVERNMENT offices through which public revenues passed, the government required only certain fixed amounts to be forwarded to the national treasury. The officials in charge of the revenues could, by various means and all sorts of excuses and plausible reasons, attach a variety of fees to the regular taxes. In this way, for every *tael* of silver that flowed into the government treasury, at least the same amount or even more would be diverted to "leakage" funds. In the later years of the imperial regime, more wine leaked into private cups than remained in the public barrel. The government, find-

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Chiang Monlin, *Tides From the West* (Taipei: China Culture Publishing Foundation, 1957), pp. 160–64; abridged.

ing itself parched as a fish in a dry pond, pressed hard for more money—whence still more "leakage" for public servants and heavier burdens for the people. . . .

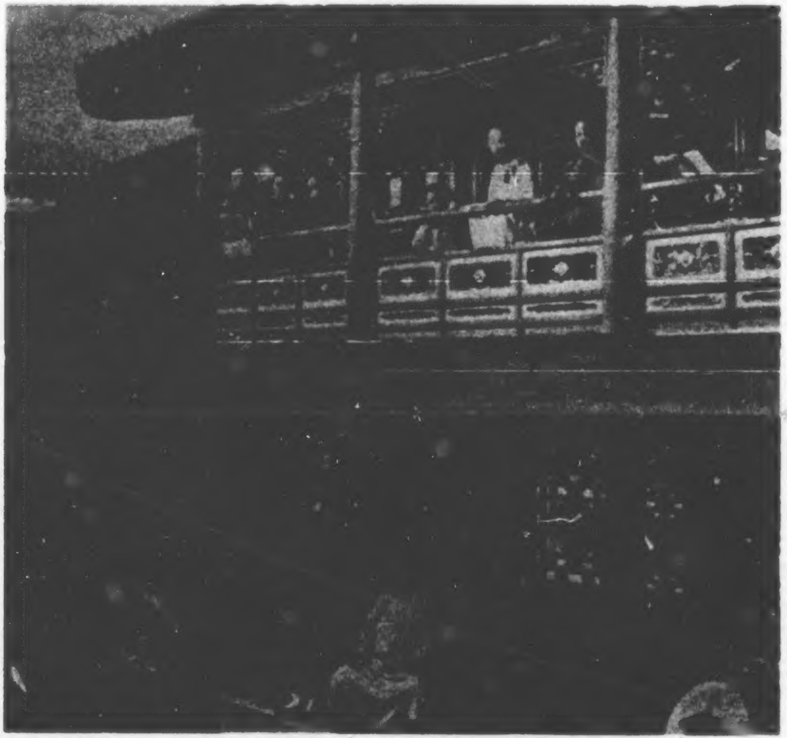
But as to the "leakage" system and how it worked. China was then divided into some twenty-two provinces, comprising about two thousand *hsien* [counties]. The chief executive of the *hsien* was the magistrate, who took charge of all financial matters and concurrently filled the role of administrator of justice in his district. His salary—not more than a few *taels* a month—was nominal. All expenses incurred by the holder of the office had to be paid out of "leakage" funds. When higher officials of the imperial government passed through his district, he had to entertain them and secure for them all the "necessities" required for their travel. To the entourage of any higher official he had to offer "presents," usually in the form of money.

On the banks of the Yao-kiang River, just outside the city wall of my native Yu-yao, stood a welcome pavilion at which the magistrate welcomed passing officials of higher rank. One sunny afternoon some forty years ago, I noticed crowds gathering at a distance from the pavilion. I joined them and watched the landing of the Imperial Examiner and his entourage, on their way to Ning-po to hold civil examinations in that prefecture. On the previous day, the magistrate had "caught," or requisitioned, many houseboats from the people, and the one set aside for the Imperial Examiner was loaded with sealed cases, their contents known only to those who had prepared them.

I watched the party change boats. The Imperial Examiner stepped into the most prominent; the sails were set and the little flotilla with the officials and "leakage" gifts on board floated downriver with the ebbing tide to the seaport city of Ning-po. Under that inspiration, I said to myself that from now on I must study hard, so that some day I myself might be an Imperial Examiner blessed with such mysterious gifts as lay hidden in those cases.

Regular "gifts" had to be presented to the secretaries of the civil governor of the province. Failing that, a magistrate could not expect them to speak kind words for him to the governor and would find them faultfinding in his official relations with the governor's office. Added together, the amount required for plain sailing in his career was by no means small. Human nature also made him not unmindful of the necessity to provide for a rainy day. And he had his family and followers to support.

Candidates for magistracy who had pull were covetous of the districts with large revenues. I remember that in the *hsien* in which we lived during my school days, no magistrate had ever held office for more than a year. The regular term of office was three years, in which a magistrate could realize approxi-



An official at home with his family and servants.

mately a hundred thousand dollars. In those times, this sum was considered very great. So the governor appointed acting magistrates, whose term was usually one year. In this way there would be more chances for expectant magistrates to share the profit.

When a magistrate retired from office after the expiration of his term and paid an official call on the governor, he was usually asked by his superior whether his district had been a good one, meaning how much he had got out of the "leakage" funds. His friends and relatives also asked him the same question by way of starting a conversation.

The higher the rank of the official through whose hands the government revenues passed, the more "leakage" flowed into his private coffer. The *taotai* of Shanghai was known to reap a profit of some 100,000 *taels* a year. Governors and viceroys of rich provinces and the powerful princes and grand ministers in Peking usually enjoyed large yearly incomes. . . .

The poisonous sap penetrated even to the households of the well-to-do. The cook would poke "holes" in his vegetable and meat baskets in order to make them "leak." Servants got something from the purchases they made for the household—especially in Peking the shops always added a certain percentage to the price for the servants who made the purchase. . . .

The practice of "leakage" permeated the entire system of *likin* [a tax on commerce]. And *likin*, like a gigantic octopus with tentacles reaching to every communication line in the country, sucked the blood out of the trade and commerce of the nation.

It worked this way. Anyone who knew how to "squeeze" the people would bid—say two hundred thousand dollars a year—to government agents for the right to run the *likin* at a certain station or a number of stations established at points on the highway where merchandise passed from one city to another. The person who won the bid would become *likin* commissioner at that station or group of stations and had the right to assess duties on the goods passing through. If he could realize a sum of three hundred thousand dollars within the year, he would turn over two hundred thousand to the government and keep the remainder for himself and his partners. So he would make most goods dutiable in order to swell his private fortune.

Once I saw a boat loaded with watermelons passing under the bridge at a station. It was stopped by a long bamboo hook from shore and several inspectors jumped down and began to thrust iron rods into the melons. The owner begged them to desist and promised to pay any amount they demanded. The "duties" were paid; the poor farmer sailed on.

Editor's Postscript: The "leakage" system of acquiring money was normal and legal in China. Indeed, as the article suggests, it was the only way underpaid officials and others providing services could live. But although custom regulated the amount of "leakage" that was acceptable, and the government removed officials who were especially voracious, the whole system was open to abuse by its very nature, and Confucian morality often exerted little restraint on outright greed. This seems to have been particularly true in the late nineteenth century, when Western power forced a breakdown of Confucian institutions. Customary leakage degenerated into widespread corruption, and this continued into the twentieth century, providing fertile soil for the growth of the Communist movement.

The People's Democratic Dictatorship

Editor's Introduction: The Communists regard the Confucian system as a dictatorship, meaning that the ruling class was using government power primarily in its own interests. By this definition, Chiang K'ai-shek's government was a dictatorship in support of the landlord class and the new bourgeoisie (the middle class of industrialists and businessmen in the cities). Dictatorship can disappear, the Communists reason, only when there are no classes, when everyone is equal and no one exploits anyone else. To bring this situation about, they say, there must be a "people's dictatorship"—that is, the use of government power in support of the workers and peasants, the great majority of the population, against those who have always oppressed them. Mao Tse-tung explains the concept in an essay he wrote in 1957, reprinted here. What do the terms "democratic centralism," "democratic dictatorship," "freedom," and "discipline" mean as Mao uses them? How would you define such terms as democracy and freedom?

OURS IS A people's democratic dictatorship, led by the working class and based on the worker-peasant alliance. What is this dictatorship for? Its first function is to suppress . . . those exploiters in the country who range themselves against the socialist revolution, to suppress all those who try to wreck our

Mao Tse-tung, *On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People* (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1958); abridged.

socialist construction; that is to say, to solve the contradictions between ourselves and the enemy within the country.

For instance, to arrest, try, and sentence certain counter-revolutionaries, and for a specified period of time to deprive landlords and bureaucrat-capitalists of their right to vote and freedom of speech—all this comes within the scope of our dictatorship. To maintain law and order and safeguard the interests of the people, it is likewise necessary to exercise dictatorship over robbers, swindlers, murderers, arsonists, hooligans, and other scoundrels who seriously disrupt social order.

The second function of this dictatorship is to protect our country from subversive activities and possible aggression by the external enemy. . . . Should that happen, it is the task of this dictatorship to solve the external contradiction between ourselves and the enemy. The aim of this dictatorship is to protect all our people so that they can work in peace and build China into a socialist country with a modern industry, agriculture, science, and culture.

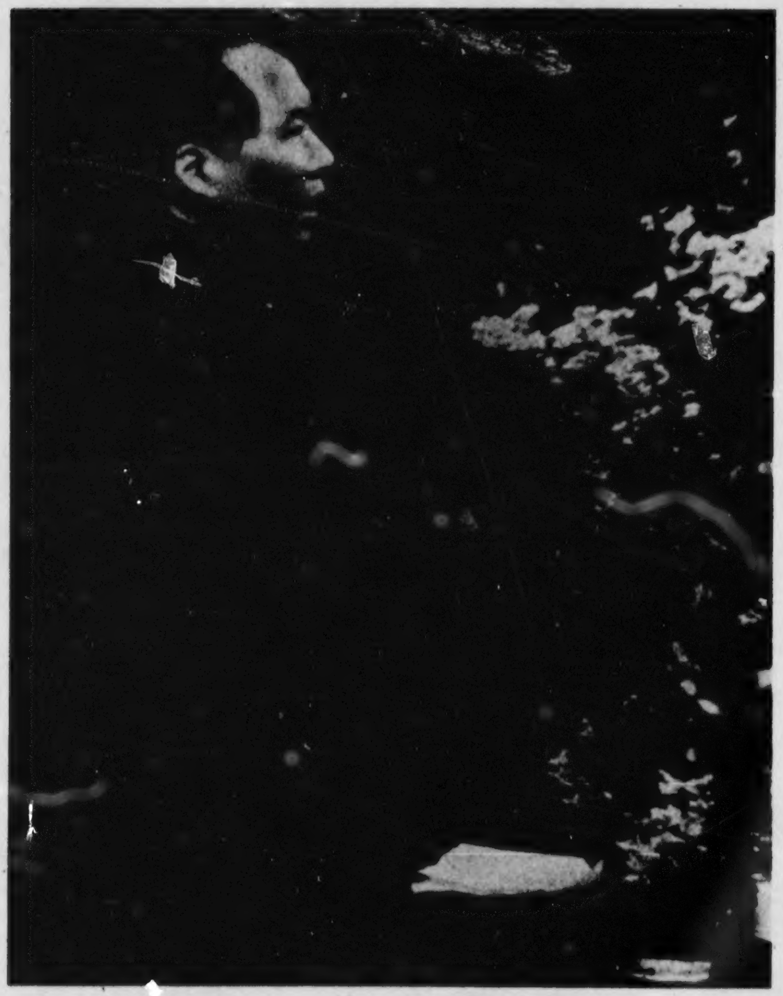
Who is to exercise this dictatorship? Naturally it must be the working class and the entire people led by it. Dictatorship does not apply in the ranks of the people. The people cannot possibly exercise dictatorship over themselves; nor should one section of them oppress another section. Lawbreaking elements among the people will be dealt with according to law, but this is different in principle from using the dictatorship to suppress enemies of the people. What applies among the people is democratic centralism.

Our Constitution lays it down that citizens of the People's Republic of China enjoy freedom of speech, of the press, of assembly, of association, of procession, of demonstration, of religious belief and so on. Our Constitution also provides that organs of state must practice democratic centralism and must rely on the masses; that the personnel of organs of state must serve the people. Our socialist democracy is democracy in the widest sense, such as is not to be found in any capitalist country. Our dictatorship is known as the people's democratic dictatorship. . . .

[Some people feel that there is] too little freedom under our people's democracy and that there was more freedom under Western parliamentary democracy. They ask for the adoption of the two-party system of the West, where one party is in office and the other out of office. But this so-called two-party system is nothing but a means of maintaining the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie; under no circumstances can it safeguard the freedom of the working people.

As a matter of fact, freedom and democracy cannot exist in the abstract; they only exist in the concrete. In a society where there is class struggle, when the exploiting classes are free to exploit the working people, the working people will have no freedom from being exploited; when there is democracy for the bourgeoisie there can be no democracy for the proletariat and other working people. In some capitalist countries the Communist parties are allowed to exist legally but only to the extent that they do not endanger the fundamental interests of the bourgeoisie; beyond that they are not permitted legal existence. Those who demand freedom and democracy in the abstract regard democracy as an end and not a means. . . .

While we stand for freedom with leadership and democracy under centralized guidance, in no sense do we mean that coercive measures should be taken to settle ideological matters and questions involving the distinction between right and wrong among the people. Any attempt to deal with ideological matters or questions involving right and wrong by administrative orders or coercive measures will not only be ineffective but harmful. We cannot abolish religion by administrative orders; nor can we force people not to believe in it. We cannot compel people to give up idealism any more than we can force them to believe in Marxism. In settling matters of an ideological nature or controversial issues among the people, we can only use democratic methods, methods of discussion, of criticism, of persuasion and education, not coercive, high-handed methods. In order to carry on their production and studies effectively and to order their lives properly, the people want their government, the leaders of productive work and of educational and cultural bodies, to issue suitable orders of an obligatory nature. It is common sense that the maintenance of



Mao Tse-tung and Chou En-lai shortly after the establishment of the new Chinese government. (From Jen-min hua-pao, *1971, No. 10, p. 30.)*

law and order would be impossible without administrative orders. Administrative orders and the method of persuasion and education complement each other in solving contradictions among the people. Administrative orders issued for the maintenance of social order must be accompanied by persuasion and education, for in many cases administrative orders alone will not work. . . .

Leadership and Democracy

The Model Official

•§*Editor's Introduction:* Under the "people's democratic dictatorship," Chinese workers and peasants participate more in government and in many respects have more voice in determining the course of their lives than ever before. They are encouraged to criticize their government and its officials, especially if the latter are corrupt, inept, or authoritarian. Many cadres have been removed on the basis of mass criticism.

But there are limits to criticism and free speech. The government and the Communist Party do not permit criticism of socialism as a system. And while one can criticize the operation of the Party, no one can question the Party's right to lead. Furthermore, the press and radio are closely controlled by the Party and are vehicles solely for expressing its point of view.

As Mao stated, the Communists believe that restraints on liberty are necessary if Chinese society is really to change. They remind us that the Confucians were even more restrictive of liberty and democracy, for under them the common people had no voice; the overwhelming majority could not even read, much less express themselves freely in print; and the law forbade anyone but officials even to discuss politics.

The following story, which appeared in the journal *Chinese Literature*, published in Peking in 1973, illustrates the balance between leadership and mass criticism that the Communists seek

Yao Keh-ming, "When the Party Secretary Showed Up," *Chinese Literature*, No. 2 (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1973), pp. 36–42.

to attain in their system of "democratic centralism." Do you think they succeed? What ideals of leadership are revealed in this fictional account? ❧

It was a typical autumn day of mellow sunshine with cloud flecks drifting across the far distant sky. Leaves rustled in a blustery wind.

Two bicycles were bowling along the highway. One of the riders, as she wiped the sweat from her face with a white towel and glanced at her watch, began to speed up. "Get a spurt on, Young Chang! There's only ten minutes left," she called out to the other rider.

This young woman, Miao Chun-min, was a former textile-worker in her early thirties. She looked brisk, neat, and full of pep as she pedaled along with a knapsack slung over her shoulder.

. . . She had recently been elected to the district Revolutionary Committee as a representative of the masses. Later she became the deputy secretary of the district Party committee. Young Chang, also a former factory worker, was transferred to work in the office of the Party committee during the same period.

The two of them were now heading for Green Pines Gardens to keep an appointment with the people living there.

A few days before, while going over the mail, Young Chang had come across a short message written on a slip of paper. In rather crude characters it read:

> Please tell Comrade Miao Chun-min that Green Pines Gardens will welcome a visit from her if she can spare the time. Why is it that we haven't been able to get in touch with her recently? We have tried several times.

This slip of paper had been forwarded by the neighborhood Party committee with a note saying that it had been handed in during a residents' meeting there.

Casually Young Chang had put it away in the file, deciding that some time later he would mention it to Miao. Actually he did not want to bother the deputy secretary with what he considered to be a trifle. Because of the absence of the Party secretary, Miao had been up to her neck in work recently and often stayed up till the small hours. Chang was concerned about her health and, wanting to do what he could to help her, he settled many routine matters himself. . . .

But in spite of her heavy load of work, Deputy Secretary Miao took particular interest in the mail—which was mostly letters from people in the district.

One morning, when looking through a file of letters, she noticed that little slip of paper. Seeing that she paused thoughtfully over it, Young Chang went over to her desk to explain:

"It's just one of those chits people keep handing in. . . ."

"No. It's more than that! It should be taken as a sharp criticism of our work," rejoined Miao. "We so often miss criticism of this sort. We seldom hear it at formal meetings or come across it in reports."

"If everybody in the district wants to talk to the Party secretary, how many more secretaries should we need?" argued Chang.

"It's a good thing if the people want to see us."

"But you're so busy . . . and this is only routine. . . ."

"The busier we are the closer we should keep to the people. . . . Since the people want to see us, we ought to visit them and pay careful attention to what they say," Miao told Chang. "Besides, this visit will help us sum up our experience of local work.". . .

[A meeting is then arranged at Green Pines Gardens, which Miao and Young Chang attend.]

The meeting went on for about two hours in a warm, friendly atmosphere.

After taking a sip of tea, Miao Chun-min looked around and said in a ringing voice, "For the last two hours you've said a great deal in praise of our work. That's an encouragement to us to do better in future." She paused to look around again and then went on with a smile. "But Chairman Mao teaches us that all things have two sides. This applies to our work. To be strict with a person is for his own good. You should make strict demands on the district Party committee, the district Revolutionary Committee, and above all on me as deputy Party secretary. I'm hoping to hear from you where I'm wrong and how I can correct my mistakes. A person needs to wash his face every day. . . ."

The people listening nodded and smiled in agreement, liking her attitude. Then suddenly someone spoke up from a far corner of the room, "Well, then, let me fire the first shot. If I'm wide off the mark, you mustn't take offense."

It was Grandma Tung, a retired worker, who spoke. She had been one of the mainstays of the propaganda team Miao worked with. Although over sixty and already gray-haired, she was the picture of health.

"During the past few days I've several times tried to reach you but failed. I was told either that you had 'some important business' on hand or that you were too busy to 'receive ordinary calls.' I wonder whether since you've become a leading comrade you've put on bureaucratic airs and forgotten all about us."

Miao was surprised because nobody had mentioned Grandma Tung's recent calls and she herself had never said anything about "important business."

The entire room was silent but everyone was looking at Secretary Miao. The atmosphere had become a little tense. . . . [Miao thought to herself]: "The fact that people criticize me openly and to my face shows that they have my interest at heart and want to help me. Since I've come here to listen to what they have to say, I must heartily welcome their criticism and then try to discover the reason for it." So she jotted down what Grandma Tung had said, and looking at her modestly and sincerely said: "Please go on."

Her attitude encouraged Grandma Tung. "I went to your office on some important business," she continued. "We retired workers have started a group among the residents to study Marxist ideology and the correct political line. We've begun by recalling our own bitter experiences in the past and contrasting them with our good life today. You did say once

A government official (with shovel) heading for work with other peasants. (*From* China Pictorial, *1970, No. 3, p. 9.*)

that if we started any new activity I should let you know. So I wanted to see you so that you could give us some advice.". . . .

After the old woman had finished, Miao said, "Grandma Tung, I accept your criticism. There's something wrong with my style of work. I have failed to go deep among the people to see what new things are cropping up. Your initiative shows your keen revolutionary spirit. We must learn from you."

These few words like a spring breeze set the entire room astir. People vied with one another for a chance to speak, some giving their opinions and others telling about the new spirit that was emerging among the retired workers and about their political activities. Miao quickly jotted down these vivid accounts, which were full of life. So the gathering turned into a real briefing. Miao was extremely pleased. That "the masses have a potentially inexhaustible enthusiasm for socialism," a truth revealed by our great leader Chairman Mao, was once more being proved true here in Green Pines Gardens.

On the way back after the meeting a question kept revolving in Miao's mind. Why, she wondered, had it become so difficult for an old comrade of hers like Grandma Tung to reach her now? What was the reason?

"Young Chang, what d'you think of the meeting?" Miao asked, turning toward Young Chang, who was cycling beside her.

"It was good, very good, I think. . . ." Young Chang's thoughts were in a turmoil. "It never occurred to me that a short note could involve something so important."

"The note was short but its lesson for us is big." Miao lapsed into deep thought again. After a while she took another look at her comrade and re-opened the conversation in a very frank and sincere way: "This incident has taught me a lot. As one of the leading personnel, any incorrect style of work or political ideology of mine will affect the work and the staff of the whole Party committee."

"No, no, you've nothing to reproach yourself with," protested Young Chang. "I'm the one. . . ." Greatly moved by Miao's attitude, he was at a loss for words.

It was already sunset. Miao glanced back over her shoulder at Green Pines Gardens, now only a green blur against the crimson sky. She said to Young Chang with feeling: "Revolution continually makes higher demands on us. It's true we were both factory workers and can be said to come from the very midst of the people, but we must be careful never to isolate ourselves from them. You know what happens to a pine tree if it is uprooted from the soil."

A Sticky Problem

Editor's Introduction: We have seen how the "leakage system" undermined the intentions of Confucianism. The story which follows, "A Sticky Problem," is a witty illustration of how social obligations in China have the same effect on communist ideology.

Like "The Scholar Who Passed the Examination," this story is a satirical treatment of a very real problem in China, namely, the tradition of "taking care" of one's relatives and friends even if it means breaking a few rules here and there. The Communists have spoken out against this practice, but deeply rooted customs are hard to dig out.

The factory director in the story shows extraordinary determination to follow the rules, risking the loss of friends and job. Is he an exception? It would seem that he is.

The author of this story, Wang Meng, is a well-known contemporary Chinese writer. In 1956 he published a short story describing the bureaucratic way of doing things in a district Party committee. The story caused a sensation and a year later Wang Meng was blacklisted and sent "down to the countryside." At that time writers were not free to criticize life in China.

Now that writers enjoy greater freedom in China, Wang Meng has emerged from 20 years of obscurity and is once again expressing his views and enjoying popularity.

Excerpted from Wang Meng, "A Spate of Visitors," *Chinese Literature*, Peking, July 1980, pp. 9-21.

Ding Yi Stirs up a Hornet's Nest

At his new post Ding Yi discovered two big problems. Here, the word "discover" is hardly appropriate, because these two problems were as obvious as lice on a bald head. They made him frown and rack his brains every day. First, there was no proper control of the by-product of paste, gluten, which the workers divided among themselves to sell, give to friends or exchange for other goods. This was scandalous. Secondly, the labour discipline was so lax that the foreman sometimes tripped over people sound asleep during their work shifts. So, after consulting everyone concerned, Ding Yi drew up a set of regulations and a system of rewards and penalties. In fact, these were nothing new, just standard practice.

A month went by. In May, Ding Yi decided to make an example of a contract worker named Gong Ding. For one thing, this young man had stayed away from work for four months without asking for leave. For another, he came bold as brass to the factory to demand gluten, and if given none cursed or beat the man in charge. Furthermore, he turned a deaf ear to reprimands. So Ding Yi asked the Party branch committee, Youth League committee, trade union, personnel office and all the other departments to discuss Gong Ding's case. Though he prodded them three times a day, it took them a month and a half to agree to his proposal that this recalcitrant worker should be dismissed. On June 21, an announcement was put up in the factory: In accordance with regulations, Gong Ding's contract is terminated.

Some people knew that Gong Ding was a distant relative of the first county Party secretary Li and felt it was a mistake to fire him, but they did not like to say so. After all, he was only a distant relative. So, the decision was finally reached and announced.

Psychological Warfare Breaks Out

Three hours after the announcement was put up, Ding Yi began to have callers. The first was Old Liu from the county Party committee office. Fifty-seven years old, with an affable expression, he prided himself on his diplomacy and good relations on all sides. Smilingly, he put one hand on Ding Yi's shoulder. "Listen to me, Old Ding," he said. "You've worked hard and run the factory well. But as for Gong Ding's case . . . ." Lowering his voice he explained Gong's relationship to the first county Party secretary. He added, "Of course, this has no bearing on his case. You're right to take disciplinary action. Secretary Li would be grateful to you if he knew. It's you I'm thinking of. You'd better not fire him. He'll still have to stay in China, in our county if he's kicked out. We'll still be responsible for him, and he's bound to ask Secretary Li for help. So, better let him off with a warning." He reasoned so earnestly and patiently that Ding Yi began to waver. Just then, however, Zhou, head of the county industrial bureau, rang up.

"What's come over you?" he bellowed. "Why pick on a relative of the county Party secretary to make an example of? What are people going to think? Hurry up and revoke your decision!"

"No, the decision stands!" replied Ding Yi loudly as he hung up the receiver. His face grim, he turned to Old Liu and said, "Outrageous!"

However, visitors kept coming. At dusk, Old Zhao, chairman of the county revolutionary committee, arrived. Zhao had worked in the county since land reform. He was most influential and strongly entrenched. With a certain reserve he shook hands languidly with Ding Yi, then paced the room while issuing his instructions, not even glancing at Ding.

"We must be prudent, mustn't oversimplify issues. Nowadays people are very sensitive. Gong Ding's dismissal would cause general dismay. In view of this, it's more judicious not to fire him."

He said no more, thinking his directive sufficient. He had paced the room slowly enunciating each word, as if weighing and savouring it. Yes, to him his words were as tasty as spiced beef.

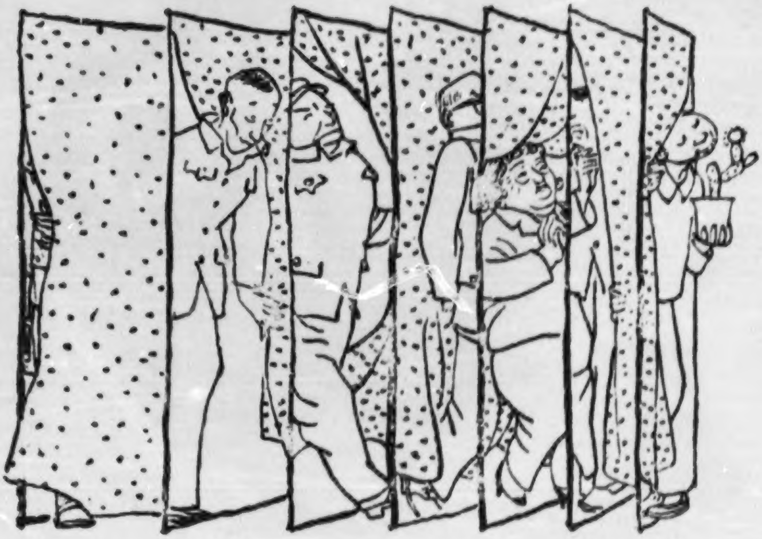
When Ding Yi went home after dark, his wife also poked her nose into his business. Of course, she scolded him out of wifely concern.

"You perishing old fool! Don't you see what you've gone and done? Has messing about with paste all day made you soft-headed? You stick to principles? Why aren't you a member of the politburo? Remember the bashing you got in 1966? Your principles not only got you into trouble but me and the children too."

This outburst stemmed from bitter resentment and love. And the tears she shed were more eloquent than words. Ding Yi sighed, and was just about to reason with her when in came another visitor. It was Young Xiao, who had befriended Ding Yi when he was in disgrace. Young Xiao had studied in the Philosophy Department of Beijing University where he was labelled a Rightist. Later he had managed to get a job in the county's electricity company. Recently, after his name was cleared, he had been promoted to be a buyer. He was short, big-nosed and extremely ugly. But the more pressure put on him, the more cheery, quick-witted and engaging he grew. His motto was: If someone slaps your face, turn the other cheek. He reckoned that this tactic succeeded three times out of four.

Young Xiao's arrival filled the house with laughter. The first thing he did after taking a seat was to finish up the dumplings left by Ding Yi and his wife who had lost their appetite. Then he asked after everyone in the family, saying admiringly, "How lucky you are to have so many relatives." Next he told them that he would soon buy and send over the TV set, a real bargain, they had long wanted. Finally he related various funny stories about their county, China and other countries till the whole family was roaring with laughter . . . .

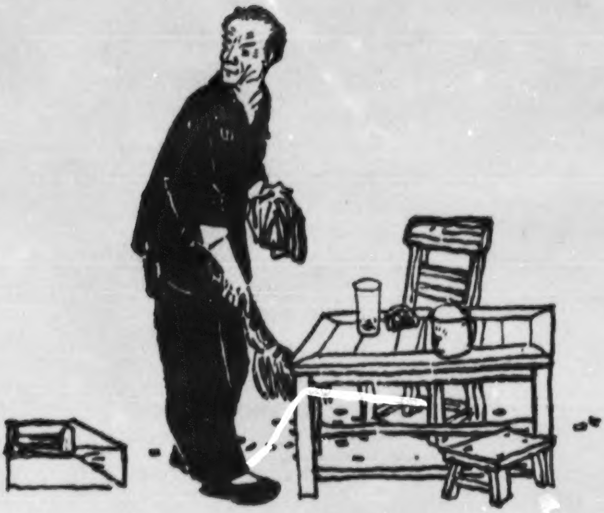
Young Xiao took advantage of this to launch his offensive. "Why, there's a small matter I nearly forgot," he said. "It's about that young rascal Gong. He's a real shit! I'll dress him down next time I see him. But Old Ding, you mustn't go too far. You and I haven't got much footing here. Nor do we have powerful backing or commodities that other people want. We depend entirely on keeping in with others. Big shots rely on their power, we nobodies on our connections. With power they can get anything they want; by keeping on good terms with others we can make do. So don't be so bull-headed. If you haven't



learned anything else all these years, you should have learned how to veer . . . . I know, you needn't explain it to me. The decision has been announced; still, it can be changed. Even the Constitution can be changed, and Chairman Mao made revisions in his writings. You're only a small factory director. Think you're more infallible than Chairman Mao and the Constitution? Go on! Get Gong Ding back. I must make myself clear. It's not the county secretary who sent me here, I came on my own initiative, having your interests at heart. Of course, Gong Ding did ask me to come and I told him, 'Don't you worry. Old Ding will do me a little favour like this.' "

He certainly had the gift of the gab, able to range from the sublime to the vulgar, to crack jokes or to scoff.

Originally, Ding Yi had not known that Gong Ding was a distant relative of the county's first secretary, and he was not unwilling to reconsider the case. But all these visitors put him on his guard. If it hadn't been the first secretary's relative, would so many people have come to urge him to "be prudent", "not to oversimplify issues" and to "consider the consequences"? This question preoccupied him, to the exclusion of other considerations.



In his annoyance he sent Young Xiao packing.

Two days passed. June 23, Sunday, was a hot, long midsummer day. Mosquitoes had kept Ding awake the previous night, and he had no appetite. At half past four that morning, a visitor arrived by bus. He was Ding Yi's brother-in-law. Tall, bespectacled and bald, he had studied in the Marxist-Leninist Institute in the 1950s and was now teaching in the prefectural Party school. He was the best known theorist in the prefecture and enjoyed great prestige. When listening to his lectures, grassroots cadres kept nodding their heads just like chickens pecking millet from the ground. He was the seventeenth visitor in the past two days. As soon as he set foot in the room, he began to talk from a theoretical point of view.

"Socialist society is a transition period in which there exist the scars of capitalism and pre-capitalism. They are inevitable and independent of man's will. This society is superior but not yet mature or perfect. It's only a transition . . . . " After this abstract preamble, he continued:

"So we say, leaders' power, their likes and dislikes, their impressions, are of vital importance. They cannot be overlooked and very often play the decisive role. We are realists, not utopian socialists like Owen and Fourier." (Ding Yi thought: Am I a utopian socialist? This label doesn't sound too bad.) "We are not children or pedants. Our socialism is built on the ground under our feet, which, though beautiful, is rather backward and undeveloped." (Ding Yi thought: Have I ever wanted to fly to paradise?) "So when we do any work, we must take all factors into consideration. To use an algebraic formula, there are 'N' factors, not one. The more complicated the world is, the larger the 'N' . . . . So, brother, you were too hasty in handling Gong Ding's case. You didn't use your brain." (Ding Yi thought: A fine brain *you* have, holding forth like this!) "Don't make a gross error, brother, Be statesmanlike. Cancel your decision and invite Gong Ding back."

Ding Yi's wife hastily put in, "That's right, that's right!" A pleased smile appeared on her face. It dawned on Ding Yi that she had asked her theorist brother to talk him round.

While listening, Ding Yi had felt as if his chest was stuffed with hog bristles. His face looked as if he was swallowing a worm. After he had listened attentively for forty minutes, he simply asked, "Did you teach these theories in your Party school?"

Within the twenty-one hours from the arrival of the theorist till 1:45 the next morning, visitors kept coming and going. Some let loose a flood of eloquence, as if they could bring the dying back to life. Some blustered as if they would swallow up the whole world. Some bowed and scraped like swinging willow branches. Some had a well-thought-out plan which they enunciated a word or two at a time, determined not to desist till their goal was reached or, failing that, to hurl Ding Yi over a cliff rather than leave his family in peace. Some brought with them presents ranging from flowers to rancid bean curd. Some promised him a flat with a southern exposure or a brand-new bicycle. Some warned him that he was isolating himself and would come to no good end. Some spoke of the need to protect the Party's prestige—to save the first secretary's face. Some worried about his safety and the fate of his family, some about preserving unity in the country, yet others about human rights, democracy and freedom.

These visitors included Ding Yi's old colleagues, schoolmates, superiors, subordinates, comrades-in-arms, fellow patients in hospital, fellow sufferers, "wine-and-meat" friends and the descendants of his late friends. Some of them were aged people with high prestige, others were promising young ones. Even those who had been in favour of his decision in the factory came over to state that they had changed their minds. Although their motives and manner of speaking differed, they agreed on one point: Gong Ding must not be fired.

Ding Yi had never thought he knew so many people and was known to so many. He could not understand their keen concern for Gong Ding or why his disciplinary action against a contract worker, a hooligan and a distant relative of the county secretary had stirred up such a hornet's nest. He was fast becoming a public enemy! He could neither eat nor rest, nor do any chores. His Sunday was spoilt. He wanted to scream, to smash things, to beat someone up. But instead he gritted his teeth and listened impassively warning himself, "Keep cool and you'll win through!"

Among the visitors was a star whom Ding Yi had admired when young. Forty years ago, she had been the best known actress in the province. And Ding Yi in his teens was infatuated for a spell with this woman thirteen years older than himself, although they did not know each other. He had never told anyone of his romantic dream. It was only in the Cultural Revolution when he was undergoing "labour reform" that he had the luck to meet her, an old lady who had retired and now weighed more than eighty kilograms. Due to his oriental, old-fashioned devotion, Ding Yi had always had a special affection for her. To his surprise this "queen" of earlier times also arrived by a donkey cart that day. Sitting on the bed, she prattled through the gaps in her teeth:

"I should have come to see you earlier, Young Ding. Look at me, aren't I an old witch? I don't know why I've aged so suddenly. Why do so many things come to an end before they've really started? It's like the stage: you're still making up when the music for the final curtain sounds . . . . "

Her lamentation over the transience of life made Ding Yi's eyes moist with tears. Of all his visitors that day she seemed to him the only one who had called on him out of pure friendship. But what she went on to say took him aback:

"I hear you're a real martinet. That's no way to run a factory. It turns people against you, doesn't it? Do unto others as you would be done by. Haven't you learned anything from your own experience? You'd better not be too hard on young people."

Still, Ding Yi was grateful to her, recalling his youthful dreams. Among the visitors that day, she was the only one who made no mention of Rose-fragrance Paste Factory, Gong Ding and the county secretary.

Some Statistics

I hope readers will excuse me if now I depart from the normal narrative style to publish some correct but well-nigh unbelievable statistics.

In the 12 days from June 21 to July 2, the visitors who came to plead for Gong Ding totalled 199.5 (the former actress didn't mention his name but had him in mind, so she is counted in as 0.5). 33 people telephoned. 27 wrote letters. 53 or 27% really showed keen concern for Ding Yi and were afraid he would run into trouble. 20 or 10% were sent by Gong Ding; 1 or 0.5% by Secretary Li. 63 or 32% were sent by people approached directly or indirectly by Secretary Li. 8 or 4% were asked by Ding Yi's wife to talk round her "die-hard" husband. 46 or 23% were not sent by anyone and did not know Ding Yi but came on their own initiative to do Secretary Li a service. The remaining 4% came for no clear reasons.

Ding Yi refused all his visitors' requests. His stubbornness enraged 85% of them, who immediately spread word that he was a fool. Ding Yi's petty appointment had gone to his head, they claimed, making him stubborn and unreasonable, and cutting him off from the masses. They asserted that he was fishing for fame and credit, that he had ulterior motives and was taking this chance to vent his spite because the county Party committee had not promoted him to a higher position.

Some said he was crazy and had always been reactionary, that he should never have been rehabilitated. Assuming that each of them spoke to at least ten people, 1,700 heard talk of this kind. For a while public opinion was strongly against him. It seemed all were out for his blood. His wife fell ill and her life was only saved by emergency measures. Even the nurse in charge of the oxygen cylinder took the chance to ask Ding Yi to change his mind.

Incidents of this kind happen quickly and end quickly too. They are like the breakfast queues in restaurants, which form as soon as fried cakes and porridge are served and disperse immediately after the food is sold out, no matter how angry those balked of fried cakes are. By August there was no further talk of the case, and by September it had escaped people's minds. Meanwhile, the production in the paste factory had gone up each day. By October, great changes had taken place. When talking together, people stuck up their thumbs saying, "Old Ding Yi really knows a thing or two!"

By December, the fame of the paste factory really had the fragrance of roses. It had become a model for all the small enterprises in the province. The Rose-fragrance Paste it produced was consistently of first-rate quality. Ding Yi went to attend a meeting in the provincial capital at which he was asked to report his experience. He went on to the rostrum, his face flushed, and said, "Communists are made of steel, not paste . . . ."

This caused a general sensation.

He added, "If we don't get down to business, our country's done for!"

He broke off there, choking, and tears ran down his cheeks.

There was a solemn silence for a moment in the auditorium.

Then, thunderous applause!

Dissent in the People's Republic

PART I

Editor's Introduction: When they came to power, the Communists exercised their "people's dictatorship" by telling the middle class, particularly the intellectuals (a term the Chinese use to identify those with a high school education or above—probably no more than 5 per cent of the population in 1949), "We welcome your help, we need your talents, if you are willing to help us build socialism. If not, we will deprive you of the right to spread your ideas." The majority of the middle class and the intellectuals went along, some of them, perhaps, with grave reservations or the feeling that there was no alternative. A few who were especially dissatisfied managed to leave China. Such was the case of Robert Loh, a businessman educated in America, who found the new China intolerable and fled to the United States in 1954. His account of his experiences, *Escape from Red China,* was published in the United States in the late 1950's and gained a sympathetic hearing from many Americans. The following selection is an excerpt from that book.

How might Loh's family background have affected his decision to leave China?

WHEN I MADE UP my mind to escape, I knew that I would have an obstacle from within myself. If I were successful, I would

Robert Loh, *Escape from Red China* (New York: Coward-McCann, 1962), pp. 15–36; abridged.

be leaving forever the one place on earth where I belonged. Such a step is painful for anyone, but I think that my background gave me a special attachment to Shanghai.

My parents typified Shanghai's peculiar combination of the ancient and modern. My father, for example, was a deeply religious Buddhist, but he was also fond of American jazz; he once even won a cup in a Charleston contest. Again, although he was a serious classical scholar and had come from a long line of famous scholars, he made his living as an investment broker.

The extreme contrasts of the city were also exemplified in my parents. No two people could have been more unlike. My father's family had had social standing but little money. My mother had been the beautiful spoiled daughter of the *nouveau riche*. My father preferred simplicity, but my mother tended to ostentation. One time, I remember, a friend told her that Madame Chiang K'ai-shek had a pair of hose that cost $18; my mother immediately stated that *she* had a pair costing $24. She wanted the best clothes, the largest mansion, the most lavish parties, and the biggest cars. My father always rode the streetcar to work, he ate only vegetarian food, and his study was starkly furnished.

Like Shanghai itself, however, my parents' differences were harmoniously blended. My father, for instance, indulged my mother in her whims and cooperated fully in the social life she loved. Meanwhile, she saw to it that he had time each day, alone and undisturbed, for study and meditation. Moreover, we spent part of each summer at a Buddhist monastery retreat, and my mother always acted as though she enjoyed it. Despite their differences, they united in lavishing attention and affection on their children.

I was born in November, 1924, the second of three sons. Later we had a baby sister, who was the family favorite. We lived in a Western-style mansion with a huge enclosed garden. We were raised in the Chinese style, however, with a large group of relatives and servants who were like family members, and we had little contact with outsiders.

My first real contact with outsiders came from four White Russian bodyguards hired by my father. The guards were big, simple men who enjoyed our children's games as much as we did. We regarded them affectionately, but in those days White Russians in Shanghai performed the most menial and degrading labor; in Chinese, the word "Russian" came to mean anything that was the shoddiest of its kind. From an early age, I thought that the worst possible fate was to become, like the Shanghai Russians, a despised refugee in a foreign land.

The other Shanghai foreigners were indirectly responsible for our needing the guards. The city was dominated by British and French, but the government was corrupt. Officials often cooperated with gangsters, with whom kidnapping was a common form of extortion. My mother was too lively for the restrictions of being adequately guarded and was kidnapped twice. Fortunately, the gangsters rarely harmed their captives, nor did they demand exorbitant ransom. The payments were made with police connivance. We children suffered terrible shock when our mother was taken. I hated gangsterism and blamed it on the foreigners.

My worst childhood shock, however, came in 1936, when I was almost twelve. Our baby sister died. The effect on my parents was disastrous. In his grief, my father lost interest in his business; he made some wrong investments and lost almost all his money. This additional catastrophe was too much for my mother, and within a few months she also died. Her relatives tended to blame my father—at least, he believed they did, and certainly thereafter they treated him coolly. My father and his sons were drawn closely together. He gave us even more attention and affection. Moreover, although he was only thirty-two, he never remarried. He threw himself into his work. He wanted to obtain for us the material comforts that, I think, he felt he owed to our mother.

The effect of all this was to make me dissatisfied with our class. We had to give up our mansion and all extravagance, but we were not so poor that we endured real hardship. Nevertheless, our relatives humiliated us and our friends abandoned us.

China in the 1940s—revolution for whom? (*Photo by Silk, from* Life Magazine *© 1946 Time, Inc.*)

We felt alone in a hostile world. I came to scorn the values of the rich. . . . By the time I entered the university, I was in the group of serious students. Among my classmates, those with the sophistication to go to nightclubs, drink, and have affairs with women were admired and envied, but the few of us who really studied were given genuine respect.

The respect I earned was increased by the fact that the famous Dr. Stewart Yui, head of the Political Science Department, took personal interest in me. He invited me to his house with the advanced students so that I could hear expert discussions on the subject. He made me read political science books not included in the course. Above all, he encouraged me to formulate and express my own ideas. I came to admire him as much as I did my father; more important, through his help I experienced an awakening of self-confidence.

My self-confidence was boosted further by the fact that my father's fortunes were slowly improving. His success, oddly enough, came largely from the confused conditions. By now World War II had started. After Pearl Harbor, all Westerners were interned, and Western business interests were taken over by the Japanese. Business conditions were chaotic. Inflation was uncontrollable, and black-marketing was everywhere. The vaguest rumor caused the stock market to fluctuate wildly. Most businessmen speculated to keep ahead of inflation, and investment brokers therefore were busy. My father refused to handle the more dubious speculative deals. Thus his profits were low but his business was more stable. As his reputation for honesty grew, the number of his clients increased, and finally he commanded a good share of the investment trade.

My father himself continued to live, as always, with spartan frugality, but he shared his new prosperity lavishly with his employees and his sons. My allowance grew until I found that I was receiving as much money as the sons of the richest industrialists. I began entertaining my few friends in the best restaurants, and soon I attracted the attention of the playboy set. . . .

Dissent in the People's Republic

PART II

Editor's Introduction: Robert Loh became a Shanghai playboy during the war with Japan, when Shanghai was occupied by the Japanese and thousands of residents of the city were dying of malnutrition and disease. After the war, in 1947, he came to the United States and enrolled as a graduate student at the University of Wisconsin. But he seems not to have studied much, for he bought himself "a large Buick Roadmaster with innumerable gadgets" and continued his life as a playboy. His frequent companion was a Chinese named Charlie Chan, the son of "a man of formidable wealth whose textile and flour mills were spread all over China."

Loh describes life with Charlie in the United States as a continual binge.

> Charlie drove me to Chicago in his magnificent Lincoln. At the hotel, everyone seemed delighted at Charlie's arrival; he strode through the place passing out large tips, and we were whisked up to a luxurious suite. After changing, we set off on a tour of the night clubs. . . . He would rent the most impressive limousine available and give the chauffeur a large tip. Thereupon, the chauffeur's duty was to see that we were provided with the best that the city offered in the way of entertainment. By the middle of 1948, I had what was, in effect, a road map to loose living in America.

Robert Loh, *Escape from Red China* (New York: Coward-McCann, 1962), pp. 166–74; abridged.

Soon after the Communists came to power, Robert Loh and Charlie Chan returned to China and entered business. Then their troubles began, as the following selection indicates. The Communists conducted a number of "Thought Reform" campaigns to change the ideas of businessmen and intellectuals in an effort to get them to cooperate actively in building socialism.

In the following selection, Robert Loh describes his experience with Thought Reform. What methods did the Communists use to deal with opposition and gain cooperation? What other methods might they have used?

EVERYONE CLASSED AS an intellectual prepared an autobiography that began at the age of eight and concentrated on the ideas he had had during his lifetime. Each paper, then, was studied by the other members of the author's group, who searched for evidence of past unacceptable ideas. Generally, the cadres allowed most of the autobiographies of a group to be passed with only token criticism and warnings, but they chose from each group one or two "heavy points" who received concentrated attention. A heavy point endured pressure from his fellow group-members to confess the "real truth" of his past thinking. The suffering of this unfortunate was intended as an object lesson for his companions, who would thus be discouraged from harboring unacceptable ideas. In my discussion group, to my dismay, I found that I was made the heavy point. . . .

No matter what I wrote in my autobiography, my companions rejected it. And with each rejection, the scorn, insults, and threats they heaped on me grew worse. During the day in my office at the mills, I faced much the same from the workers. No one who has never lived day and night as the focal point of such vilification and hatred can understand the effect it has. I could think of nothing but the paper I was having to write and rewrite endlessly. I was long past caring what I confessed to; I only wanted desperately to discover what the Communists expected of me.

At the same time I did not expect to be accused and punished as a counterrevolutionary. In my case, no real evidence of unacceptable thinking existed; moreover, I had given every indication that I supported the regime and endorsed Party policies. I remembered the case of my friend Professor Long, who, during Thought Reform, had broken under pressure and had confessed to crimes of which the authorities later exonerated him; nevertheless, because he had collapsed he had been regarded as being "unable to stand up to the test of political purity." Thus I guessed that I was merely being tested, and my only real fear was that, through some unwitting mistake, I might fail to pass. . . . [For a number of weeks, Loh worked at his regular job during the day and attended his discussion group at night.]

As the weeks passed, . . . I slowly perceived that the period of my stay in the United States interested the cadre the most. Finally, I got on the right track. What was wanted from me mostly was confirmation of the weird picture Communists have of America. I had only to remember the anti-American propaganda and invent personal experiences that made the usual misconceptions seem accurate. Thus I wrote fictional stories of having witnessed horrible scenes in which American police suppressed workers and minority racial groups. I described incidents in which I had suffered unspeakable humiliation. I listed the names and guessed-at addresses of every American I had known, and when the list was not considered long enough I added to it a score of fictitious names and addresses. In every case, these Americans, according to my account, had denounced the Communist Party and had persecuted me because I would not accept their viewpoint. Anyone who read my autobiography would think that I had barely managed to escape from America. I found that the worse I made my picture of the United States, the lighter I could make my own errors in thinking. Ultimately, I needed to say merely that, because of my bourgeois background, some of my own feelings and attitudes had been similar to the American imperialists', and only now did I realize that I had harbored such evil thoughts.

After eight weeks of being struggled against, my autobiography, now 70 pages long, was suddenly accepted as "relatively thorough." The ordeal was over. . . .

The normal relationship between all human beings in China was . . . altered by the Elimination campaign.* Although the campaign turned out to be against only one segment of society, the terror was spread throughout the entire population. It must be understood that the pressure from the authorities came in a kind of rhythm. Suppression was inflicted, released slightly, and then applied again. Each time the weight descended on us, our apprehension was greater and fear sank deeper. People now were increasingly frightened of each other,

An industrialist and his wife at home. The state purchased his factories and pays 5% interest on the bonds it gave him in exchange. (Photo by Marc Riboud.)

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* A campaign to eliminate bribery, tax evasion, theft of state assets, cheating in labor and materials, and stealing of state economic information. The campaign was directed particularly at businessmen in preparation for the state purchase of private industry.

and we were so wary of even our closest friends and relatives that free discussion was almost impossible.

I remember the evening when this was brought home to me. I was with the Chans, relaxing in their living room—J.P., Charlie, their wives and me. The children were in bed, and the servants had retired. J.P. happened to mention something about military conscription, and Charlie suddenly said, "What a pity I am over thirty years old and thus do not have a chance to be conscripted as I would wish. I regret that I miss this opportunity to serve my country and my people."

For a moment we were silent as we adjusted to the shock of hearing "group-meeting talk" in a private living room.

Charlie's wife then said quietly, "You are in your house with your family, Charlie. You needn't speak like that to us."

But she was wrong, and we all knew it. I think that each of us was picturing in his mind what would happen if one of us was found unacceptable to the regime. If we were then to save ourselves we would have to denounce him and use our knowledge of him, acquired from years of close friendship, to betray him. Instinctively each of us in that group realized that the others represented the source of his greatest danger. For months, although we outwardly seemed unchanged, our conversation together had been most inconsequential "small talk" interspersed with such "safe" ideas as Charlie had automatically expressed. I know also that when Charlie made his comment each of us experienced a new depth of despair, but we were afraid even to show our anguish. Instead, we returned to the meaningless chatter.

The same night that Charlie made his comment, I began to keep a diary. A lesson I had learned thoroughly from the Elimination campaign was that what we could say with impunity today might be regarded as a capital offense a year later. Many who had been suppressed in the campaign had been heroes not long before. Thus, in my diary, I noted down what I had said during the day in public and in private, and I worked at making all my utterances "correct" and model.

Editor's Postscript: Robert Loh paints a grim picture. No doubt he and people like the Chans suffered considerable anxiety in this period. But it is clear that the Revolution was not intended to serve the interests of men like Loh and Chan. It was, rather, for the people who sweated in Chan's flour and textile mills; it was for the disease-ridden beggars and prostitutes in Shanghai; it was for the poor peasants in Stone Wall Village.

What happened to businessmen like Loh and Chan? The government took over ownership of business and industry and compensated the former owners in bonds, which still pay 5 per cent interest per year. The amount paid a businessman was probably not what he considered his business to be worth, but it enabled him to live better than most Chinese. Former owners often stayed on at their place of business as managers, although their authority now had to be shared with others.

During the weeks in which Loh was writing his autobiography and being criticized, he was going to work every day in a white-collar office job. And Charlie Chan still had servants. Thus it appears that the Communists did not destroy men like these. Instead, they sought, through intense psychological pressure, to win their cooperation in building a new society. Those who were deemed "incorrigible" were sent to the countryside to do physical labor for a period of time, and some, unable to stand the pressure, committed suicide.

There were also some who were executed or jailed. They were those who were convicted, sometimes without much of a trial, of high crimes—big-time gangsters, grain-hoarders, counterrevolutionaries working to bring back Chiang K'ai-shek, opium-pushers, and people who for one reason or another were staunchly anti-Communist. No one seems to know how many were executed. It is doubtful that it was as many as died each year of malnutrition and disease in the old society.

Still, the hardships that resulted for some from revolutionary struggle should not be minimized. Whether or not one favors the Revolution depends in large measure on one's position in the old society. For the peasants of Lin-hsien County, the revolution brought prosperity. For Robert Loh, it brought ruin.